The BCP Manual

Guidance to Great Britain's Biosecurity Import Controls at Border Control Posts

Version 1.2 - March 2024

The BCP Manual is intended to help staff working at BCPs – and people in related commercial import sector and enforcement roles - to interpret, understand, carry out and comply with the wide range of import controls and processes that are legally required at BCPs in Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales).

The guidance set out in this Manual has been developed and updated by Defra, with the help and advice of experts across the import controls sector. It replaces the Border Inspection Post Manual, which was developed before Great Britain exited the European Union in 2020.

The Manual provides guidance on official import controls carried out at BCPs for:

- products of animal origin (POAO)
- products or food not of animal origin (PNAO)
- composite products
- animal by-products (ABP)
- germinal products
- hay and straw

The Manual does not currently cover controls for live animals, plants, or plant products (other than those noted above).

Defra's aim is to support users in understanding and applying the statutory controls set out in the Official Controls Regulations (OCR), which remain operable in U.K. legislation following our exit from the EU.

Please note that the BCP Manual is not legal advice. If you are unsure about the specific requirements for any OCR legislation, you may need

to refer directly to the relevant Statutory Instruments, and/or seek legal advice from your employer organisation.

Enforcement authorities should ensure that checks comply with the relevant legislation, in accordance with the guidance provided in this Manual, and should verify for themselves the effectiveness of this guidance.

The Manual is 'living' guidance – it will be amended and updated, to reflect changes in legislation and in best practice relating to biosecurity border controls in Great Britain. For example, amendments and additional content guidance are being prepared to be included in the Manual from the start of the Border Target Operating Model regime in 2024.

Content of the Manual will also be revised periodically, to reflect feedback from users. We hope you find this guidance generally helpful, in delivering the detailed, complex, and essential biosecurity functions of your Border Control Post. If you do have any comments on the content of the Manual, including requests for specific information, clarification of any aspects of the guidance, or suggestions for changes which may be helpful, please contact BCPManual@defra.gov.uk.

OCR Policy and Legislation Team
Animal and Plant Health & Welfare Directorate
Defra
March 2024

BCP Manual – index of contents

Contents

Glossary

The Animal By Products Regulations (ABPR)
The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013 – the domestic enforcing legislation for Regulation (EC) 1069/2009 and Regulation (EU) 142/2011. Similar legislation is in place in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Applicant
Any commercial or public sector organisation can apply to seek approval for a new BCP, or modifications to an existing BCP they already operate. Applicants must initially submit an Expression of Interest to the Defra Designation Team.

Approved rendering premises / approved ABP premises
Premises approved in accordance with the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013. Similar legislation is in place in Scotland and Wales

Aquaculture animals
Any aquatic animal at all its life stages as defined in Article 3 of Council Directive 2006/88, including eggs and sperm or gametes, reared in a farm or mollusc farming area, including any aquatic animal from the wild intended for a farm or mollusc farming area

Aquaculture product
A product derived from an aquaculture animal

Authorised officer
The person who is authorised by a central authority, a local authority or the Food Standards Agency (FSA), either generally or specially, to act in matters arising under the

The Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (legislation.gov.uk) whether or not they are an officer of that central authority or local authority or of the Agency

BCP
A Border Control Post (BCP) approved under the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625. A 'border control post' means a place, and the facilities belonging to

it, designated by the appropriate authority for the performance of the official controls provided for in Article 47(1) OCR.

Border Notifications
Border Notifications (BN) is a module of IPAFFS and is primarily an IT tool designed to swiftly exchange information between GB portal authorities and national competent authorities on biosecurity and public health risks related to food and feed. It replaces the EU Rapid Alert System for Feed and Food.

CHED
The Common Health Entry Document (CHED)

CDS
The Customs Declaration Service (Customs Declaration Service - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))

Competent authority
The 'competent authority' is defined in OCR as:

(a) the appropriate authority responsible for the organisation of official controls and of other official activities, in accordance with the OCR and related import regulations
(b) any other authority to which that responsibility has been conferred
(c) where appropriate, the corresponding authorities of another country.

Composite products
A foodstuff intended for human consumption that contains both processed products of animal origin and products of plant origin and includes those where the processing of primary product is an integral part of the production of the final product.

Consignment
A number of animals or quantity of goods covered by the same official certificate, official attestation or any other document, conveyed by the same means of transport and coming from the same territory or country, being of the same type, class or description.

Customs warehouse
A building approved by HMRC, in which goods are stored subject to the Customs procedures and storage procedures on imports set out in the Taxation (Cross-border Trade) Act 2018.

Designation
Designation is the process required to formally confirm that facilities at a GB import point of entry comply with the OCR legal requirements for a facility to be designated. Designation allows a BCP to carry out biosecurity controls and checks on the specific import commodities for which it has been designated.

BCPs are officially formally designated as complying with all OCR requirements by the 'Appropriate Authority'. The GB Appropriate Authorities are:

- Defra (for England)
- The Scottish Government (for Scotland)
- The Welsh Government (for Wales)

Designation decisions made by each Appropriate Authority are informed by the evaluation work and final audit assessment of a number of different 'Competent Authorities', acting on behalf of their respective Appropriate Authorities. These include

- In England and Wales:
    - The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for live animals, animal products, plants, plant products and wood
    - Food Standards Agency (FSA) for high-risk food or feed of non-animal origin (subject to an increased level of controls at BCPs) and plastic kitchenware from China
    - The Forestry Commission (FC) for wood and wood products
- In Scotland:
    - APHA and Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

Designation can be withdrawn or suspended if the relevant competent authority determines that:

- the BCP no longer complies with the minimum requirements; and/or
- its activities pose a risk to public, animal and plant health.

Destination establishment
The establishment identified in the delivery address section of Part 1 of the CHED.

Enforcement authorities
Enforcement authorities ensure that the biosecurity requirements set out in OCR and other related legislation are complied with and carry out all required legal measures in the event of non-compliance (for example, Issue of Notice.

The term ‘enforcement authority’ is defined in Regulation 31 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011:

1. In these Regulations the enforcement authorities are county councils, district councils, Port Health Authorities, London boroughs (or, in the City of London, the Common Council of the City of London), metropolitan districts and unitary authorities.
2. Where there is a Port Health Authority, London borough (or, in the City of London, the Common Council of the City of London), metropolitan district or unitary authority, any duty placed on a county or district council is performed by that authority.
3. Where the Common Council of the City of London is acting as a local authority or a port health authority, that Council is the enforcement authority for live animal imports in all London Boroughs and within the Heathrow Airport border control post.

Fishery products

All seawater or freshwater animals whether wild or farmed and including all edible forms, parts, and products of such animals, with the exception of:

- live bivalve molluscs
- live echinoderms
- live tunicates
- live marine gastropods
- all mammals, reptiles, and frogs.

Free warehouse or Free zone

These Customs terms are defined in the Taxation (Cross-border Trade) Act 2018

Goods

For the purpose of this Manual, ‘goods’ means all goods - excluding animals - that are subject to one or more of the rules referred to in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2007, which defines products of animal origin that are subject to the biosecurity controls set out in the Official Controls Regulation 2019.

'Goods’ or ‘products’ are also defined in TARP Regulation 2 as:

- any product of animal origin, germinal product, animal by-product, derived product, or hay or straw subject to official controls at border control posts; and

- any composite product listed in Commission Decision 2007/275 concerning lists of animals and products to be subject to official controls at BCPs.

These goods are commonly known as Products of Animals (POA), or Products of Animal Origin (POAO).

Import
'Entry into Great Britain' means the action of bringing animals and goods into Great Britain from a third country.

Import rules
Rules referred to in Chapter 5 of Title II of the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625

IPAFFS
The Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) is a web-based service for the application for, and issuing of, Common Health Entry Documents (CHEDs) for imports from outside the EU and EEA of live animals, their products and germplasm. IPAFFS is the system used for notifying GB authorities of imports of live animals, their products and germplasm into GB from countries outside the EU and EEA.

Monitored consignments
Products that have to be moved from the point of entry BCP to the destination establishment shown on the CHED, in accordance with Article 77 of the OCR and as detailed in Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/1666

Official Controls
Activities performed in accordance with Article 2(1) of the Official Controls Regulation OCR 2017/625 and its delegated and implementing Acts.

Official Inspector
The official veterinarian (OV) or official fish inspector (OFI) at a BCP.
Any person or organisation with the authority to perform checks or make decisions at the BCP.

Official Fish Inspector (OFI)
An environmental health officer appointed as a fish inspector by the local authority pursuant to Regulation 12(4) of the TARP Regulations 2011.

Official Veterinarian (OV)
A veterinary surgeon appointed by an appropriate authority as required by Regulation 12 of the TARP Regulations 2011

Operator
Any natural or legal person subject to one or more of the obligations provided for in the rules referred to in Article 1(2) of the OCR - more simply, the commercial or public sector body that operates a formally designated BCP.

Products - see 'Goods' above

Returned products
Products originally exported from the customs territory of one country to another, that are returned because they have been refused entry by the other country.

TARP Regulations
The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011. Similar legislation is in place in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. TARP is the enforcement instrument of the import rules in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Transhipment
The movement of an imported consignment from a third country to another third country, where the consignment:

1. arrives, by a vessel / aircraft / train, at a GB point of entry with a designated BCP.
2. is moved to another vessel / aircraft / train, at the same point of entry and within the area of the same Customs office.

Transhipments need to be recorded, to confirm that they have entered and then exited GB – but they will not be required to undergo BCP controls that are applied to import transits, or to imported goods entering the GB market.

Transit
The movement of consignments from one third country to another, via movement across GB territory by road, rail, or waterway transport. The consignment arrives at one point of entry and BCP and is subject to minimal checks to allow it to 'transit' between the point of entry BCP and the point of exit BCP, where it will leave GB and be sent on to another country.

Legislation for the import to Great Britain of sanitary and phytosanitary commodities

Impact of EU exit on GB legislation

Under the EU Withdrawal Act 2018, any EU law that was already in force before or on 31st December 2020 became retained EU law in Great Britain. Similar retaining legislation is in place in Scotland and Wales.

Any *EU* legislation or regulations that are or will be amended, updated or repealed after 31st December 2020 will not apply to Great Britain from 1st January 2021. New EU regulations will only have any effect in U.K. legislation if Parliament assents to specific equivalent GB laws being passed.

Current GB product legislation

National product legislation for Great Britain is set out in the following statutory instruments:

- The Food and Feed Hygiene and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2020
- The Food and Feed Hygiene and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
- The Food and Feed Imports (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- The Food and Feed Hygiene and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- The General Food Law (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
- The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019
- The Specific Food Hygiene (Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- The Import of, and Trade in, Animals and Animal Products (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
- The Official Controls Regulation 2019 (as amended by:
    - The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
    - The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) (No. 2) Regulations 2020

- The Aquatic Animal Health and Alien Species in Aquaculture, Animals, and Marketing of Seed, Plant and Propagating Material (Legislative Functions and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
- The Animals, Aquatic Animal Health, Invasive Alien Species, Plant Propagating Material and Seeds (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
- The Trade in Animals and Animal Products (Legislative Functions) and Veterinary Surgeons (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The APHA Vet Gateway website publishes:

- OVS Notes setting out changes to import controls for animals and products of animal origin; and
- Import Information Notes (IIN)

Responsibilities of Defra, and of the Devolved Governments (Scotland and Wales)

Defra and the Devolved Governments (DGs) in Scotland and Wales are legislated as the respective OCR Appropriate Authorities for England, Scotland and Wales.

Each Appropriate Authority has the ultimate responsibility for governance and delivery of SPS biosecurity controls in their respective Administrations - the role previously held by the European Commission when GB was an EU Member State.

Oversight and governance of activities at all designated or proposed GB Border Control facilities

Defra and the DGs govern the key designation and delivery decisions for all BCPs, by:

- Considering initial Expressions of Interest to establish new BCPs, or to change the category or capacity specifics of existing designated BCPs.
    - The Appropriate Authorities consider whether the facilities described in the Expression of Interest will comply with basic legal principles (eg, the location of the proposed BCP and its proximity to the import Point of Entry); and whether there is sufficient justification for an expansion of BCP capacity.
- Taking the final decision, based on the supporting audit evidence of the relevant Competent Authorities (APHA and related Agencies), to either agree or withhold formal designation. Once designated, a BCP will immediately be open to deliver controls for imports in any of its designated commodities.
- Ensuring final designation decisions are immediately and accurately reflected on the IPAFFS and .gov listings - allowing all importers or their agents to choose the appropriate BCP for the commodities they are importing, at their preferred point of entry.

- withdrawing or suspending the designation of any BCP, where compliance or capacity to deliver the required biosecurity controls is found to be defective.

Government policy on BCPs

Defra and the Devolved Governments deliver the policies of their respective Governments for biosecurity border controls legislation and delivery. This responsibility is delivered through close engagement and communication with a wide range of stakeholders, including:

- the respective Administrations
- the relevant biosecurity Agencies - in OCR legislation, these are the Competent Authorities who deliver delegated powers on behalf of the Appropriate Authorities. These Competent Authorities include APHA, FSA, FC, FSS, and APHA CIT
- Local Authorities, who are delegated to deliver operational and enforcement activities at BCPs within their geographical jurisdictions
- Other government Departments, including HMRC and Border Force, Department for Transport, and Cabinet Office
- Existing and potential BCP operators, and trade and commercial entities engaged in the import of animals, plants, and animal and plant products.

The respective Administrations also lead on:

- policy for training new Official Inspectors
- policy advice to APHA and related Agencies, as needed
- informing BCPs about changes in the wide body of biosecurity and border controls legislation. This includes laws or regulations affecting veterinary checks.

Responsibilities of His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs

HMRC must check that a Border Control Post (BCP) has issued a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) before Customs releases any consignment of products of animal Origin (POAO). The aim is to prevent any goods subject to biosecurity controls from legally entering the GB market unless they have completed all BCP controls and checks as required.

Consignments cannot be released from Customs control without a validated CHED.

, CDS clears the consignments ALVS provides information to CDS on “other” checks

Responsibilities of the Animal and Plant Health Agency, and the Animal and Plant Health Agency Centre for International Trade

APHA

Advice on BCP structure and equipment

APHA advises applicants and operators of BCPs on compliance with the regulations covering structural and equipment requirements for BCPs to be designated and to operate compliantly, as laid down in the Official Controls Regulations 2017/625 and Regulation 2019/1014.

Audit of BCPs

APHA regularly audits BCPs, to ensure that they are maintained and operated in line with the Official Controls Regulations 2017/625.

Provide summaries of audit reports

APHA BCP Designation & Audit Team provide Defra with summaries of audit reports written by APHA auditors.

Advice on Expressions of Interest for new or amended BCPs

APHA, together with other relevant policy and operational public bodies, will assess and determine whether Expressions of Interest sent to Defra - for new BCPs, or for expansion or alteration of facilities at existing designated BCPs - meet the general legal and public interest requirements for the proposed BCP.

Training and information for Official Inspectors

Working with Defra, FSA and FSS, APHA will provide training for Official Inspectors working at BCPs.

Issue of suspension notices

APHA will issue a suspension notice for a BCP where a serious breach in compliance with the relevant OCR legislation has been identified.

APHA must be informed of any improvement notice served to a BCP operator by the relevant port health authority (PHA).

APHA CIT

Maintain the BCP compendium on the APHA Vet Gateway website

APHA CIT updates the BCP Compendium as needed. The Compendium covers new legislation on Products of Animal Origin imports.

Issue authorisations

APHA CIT issues authorisations for research and diagnostic and trade samples, and for non-harmonised products imported under national rules.

Provide advice to importers

APHA CIT advises importers about current import policy and policy changes.

Help to draft complaint letters

APHA CIT provides help to BCP Official Inspectors, to draft and write complaint letters to Official Vets in other countries. The letters are issued by Defra.

Inspect BCPs regularly

APHA CIT, or APHA BCP Designation & Audit Team, inspect BCPs regularly to ensure that the facilities meet all legal compliance requirements, including those set out in OCR and TARP.

Send new BCP information to Defra

APHA CIT supports and provides advice to APHA auditors relating to the structural, facility and procedural requirements for designations of new BCPs and amendments to existing BCPs.

APHA CIT provides Defra OCR Designation Policy Team with plans and documentation relating to applications for new BCPs and amendments to existing BCPs.

Responsibilities of the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland

Advice on policy

FSA and FSS advise BCPs on public health and food safety issues connected to products of animal origin (POAO) and products not of animal origin (PNAO).

Advice on legislation

FSA and FSS must tell BCPs if there are changes in public health / food safety law dealing with POAO and PNAO.

Undertake risk assessments

FSA and FSS undertake risk assessments on food commodities and food contact materials and advise BCPs on options that could be taken when a consignment is non-compliant. The risk assessments contribute to the evidence that is collated for the introduction of additional import controls - including, but not limited to, intensified official controls (IOCs).

Imported food training

FSA and FSS both deliver and organise delivery of imported food training (within budgetary constraints) for BCP staff, including training for official fish inspectors. They also advise on the policy for training updates at BCPs.

Inspect / review BCPs

FSA and FSS inspect and review BCPs regularly to ensure:

- their facilities meet legal requirements.
- they are operating within the Official Controls Regulations.

Responsibilities of the Official Inspector

For biosecurity border controls, the Official Inspector (OI) is **any person or organisation with the authority to perform checks or make decisions at the BCP**. Generally, this will be either the Official Veterinarian (OV) or the Official Fish Inspector (OFI).

Help with checks

Any sufficiently trained staff can assist with checks, as long as they are supervised by an OV or OFI, in line with the he definition of 'supervision' or 'direction' as defined in the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct."

The CHED should only be signed by the OV / OFI if the OV/OFI has had Direct involvement in the checks, **or** if support documents have been provided, in line with the Principles of Certification contained the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct.

Conflicts of interest

The Official Food and Feed Controls require that Official Inspectors have a mechanism for reporting conflict of interest.

The Controls suggest OIs should have a reporting system - with yearly confirmation, in writing, of any potential conflicts of interest.

A brief written protocol setting out the OI reporting system should be available at the BCP for APHA audit visits.

Main responsibilities of the Official Veterinarian

The OV is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of official controls at the Border Control Post.

Checks on goods

The OV ensures that goods presented to the BCP are checked as set out in Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2130 - other than fishery products where an official fish inspector (OFI) has been appointed.
As good practice, Defra and FSA recommend that the maximum number of consignments that a full-time OV should check in one year is 3,500 [to note, this recommendation is currently under review]. The level of OV cover will be dependent upon the type of consignment imported and any seasonal variations in trade. Ultimately it is for the Port Health Authority to decide the level of OV cover required at any specific BCP, and to describe how they consider the cover is appropriate, should this be challenged during APHA audit checks. This also applies to OFI's

The appropriate level of staffing resource required for each BCP will be assessed by Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) auditors, who will consider the circumstances, types of consignment imported, and any seasonal variations in trade.

Ensure equipment and facilities are available

The OV ensures that the necessary equipment and facilities are available at the BCP to enable veterinary checks for the designated commodities to be carried out effectively. The BCP must meet the relevant requirements, as set out in retained Regulation 2017/625 and 2019/1014.

Collecting samples for the National Monitoring Plan (NMP)

The OV must ensure that sufficient appropriate samples (including samples for microbiological examination, such as detection of Salmonella) are collected and submitted for laboratory examination under the NMP, including where reinforced checks are in place.

Attend all checks

The OV must be present at the BCP when all veterinary checks are in progress. Documentary checks are currently still required to take place at the BCP, except for where specific exceptions are in force (for example, COVID easements permitting documentary checks away from the BCP).

Issue the Common Health Entry Document (CHED)

The OV issues CHEDs for all consignments, and notifications of rejections (including rights of appeal) when consignments fail veterinary checks.

Ensure rejected consignments are compliantly handled and disposed of

The OV must ensure that rejected consignments are handled and disposed of in accordance with the relevant animal by-product (ABP) enforcement regulations.

Ensure staff are properly managed and trained

The OV, in co-operation with the CA, shall ensure that staff working in a BCP are properly managed and trained. All staff involved with vet checks must be appropriately qualified, and have the necessary skills and expertise for their roles. It shall be the joint responsibility of the CA and OV to ensure such staff are competent. RCVS Code of Professional Conduct.

Ensure all required records and documents are available

The OV ensures that all documents and records required to be retained are held at the BCP. Examples of these include:

General

- Records of internal verification checks on procedures / training, to include any remedial action required and outcomes.
- Training records - including evidence of internal & cascade training.
- Declarations of conflicts of interest.
- Records / evidence of meetings / contact with other government bodies, particularly engagement with Border Force.
- Contingency plans - e.g., a manual / alternative clearance procedure.
- Distribution of information to all officers (e.g. OVS notes).
- Contact details of key operational partners & stakeholders.

Structure & operation

- Protocol for movement of consignments from quayside to BCP, including use of computerised or manual freight systems, application of “holds” on system, request for consignment to be presented at the BCP, and controls on consignments which exit, and re-enter customs approved areas.
- Cleaning & disinfection protocols & timetables, with supporting docs to demonstrate correct implementation.
- Maintenance plan - with a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and evidence of monitoring by PHA.
- A SOP describing how movements of personnel and products are carried out to minimise the risk of cross contamination (per OCR Regulation 2019/1014 Art 3.9) for BCPs designated for multiple product types (e.g. POAO, HC & NHC, FNAO, allergens). SOPs must cover all areas of the inspection facilities and be reflected in the cleaning protocol above.
- Pest control records, including evidence of action taken on recommendations.
- Contingency plan for additional storage in unusual or unexpected circumstances.
- Site-specific Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), if BCP facilities are used by other competent authorities.
- Copies of plans held at BCP, to include:
    - Location of BCP within the curtilage of the port
    - Customs approved area
    - Detailed design of BCP/IC as designated.
- If there are separate Inspection Centres at the BCP, a list of consignments inspected in each one.
- Evidence of any non-compliance or enforcement action taken by the PHA against the BCP operator or their contractors.
- Records of internal verification checks on BCP facilities, to include any remedial action required, with target dates & outcomes recorded.

Veterinary checks records

- Manifest checks.
- Requests for further details on consignments with incomplete or incorrect descriptions of, e.g., groupage or consolidation.
- Documentary checks.
- ID checks.
- Physical checks.
- Actions taken on rejected consignments – re-export, destruction or transformation.
- Procedure for random selection of consignments for identity checks, including a system for selecting consignments for full turn-out
- Procedure for random selection of consignments for physical checks.
- Goods subject to monitoring procedures (previously called channelling) (OCR Regulation 2019/1666).
- Transits and Transhipments (OCR Regulation 2019/2124).
- Sampling plan - in line with the National Monitoring Plan.
- Sampling procedure - to include storage & despatch.
- Intensified Official Controls.
- SOP for illegal imports – instructions for referral to Border Force.
- Follow-up register, to cover:
    - Transits
    - Transhipments
    - Monitored goods
    - Rejected consignments.

Update the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) database

The OV must monitor IPAFFS for pre-notifications and messages about consignments scheduled to be handled at the BCP.

The OV is responsible for ensuring CHEDs are fully completed on IPAFFS as required.

Attend and lead external audits

The OV must be present at and lead all external audits of the BCP. Organisations that can carry out BCP audits include:

- Animal and Plant Health Authority (APHA)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

Ensure the BCP is managed in a hygienic manner

The OV must ensure that the BCP is managed in a hygienic manner, in compliance with the retained EU Hygiene Regulations for the commodities concerned, and that the conduct of required controls at the BCP does not pose a biosecurity risk to the consignments being handled.

Liaise with Customs officials

It is the responsibility of Border Force:

- To enforce import controls when an import has not been notified to a BCP
- To check customs warehouses, manifests, and ships' stores for third country animal products which have not been notified to a BCP, and
- To take appropriate action to identify consignments that have not been notified or presented to any BCP.

The OV liaises with Customs officials to:

- ensure that adequate measures are in place to identify smuggled products of animal origin
- prevent unchecked products of animal origin leaving the port or airport
- advise of any increased risks identified from rejected consignments

Record follow-up actions for consignments

The OV must ensure that CHEDs for all consignments requiring follow-up actions - for example, channelled goods, re-exports or destroyed goods - are recorded in the follow-up register and resolved as required.

If the OV does not receive confirmation that the consignment has fulfilled the required follow-up actions (has reached its destination, been re-exported, or has been destroyed), they will need to investigate what has happened.

Main responsibilities of the Official Fish Inspector (OFI)

For any BCP designated for fish or fishery products, the OFI is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of the relevant official controls.

Checks on fishery products

The OFI ensures that fishery products presented to the BCP are checked as required in Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2130.

Ensure equipment and facilities are available

The OFI ensures that the necessary equipment and facilities are available at the BCP to enable veterinary checks for the designated commodities to be carried out effectively. The BCP must meet the requirements set out in retained Regulation 2017/625 and 2019/1014.

Collecting samples for the National Monitoring Plan (NMP)

The OFI must ensure that sufficient appropriate samples of fishery products are collected and submitted for laboratory analysis under the NMP, including where reinforced checks are in place.

Attend all checks

The OFI must be present at the BCP for all checks on fishery products.

Issue the Common Health Entry Document (CHED)

The OFI issues CHEDs for fishery product consignments, and for notifications of rejections (including rights of appeal) in the case of consignments that fail veterinary checks.

Ensure rejected consignments are compliantly handled and disposed of

The OFI must ensure that rejected consignments are handled and disposed of in accordance with the Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013.

Ensure staff are properly managed and trained

The OFI must ensure that staff at the BCP are properly managed and trained.

Ensure all required records and documents are available

The OFI ensures that all documents and records required to be retained under control regulations are held at the BCP. Examples of the relevant records can be found here.

Update the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) database

The OFI must monitor IPAFFS for pre-notifications and messages about consignments coming to the BCP.

The OFI is responsible for ensuring CHEDs are fully completed on IPAFFS as required.

Attend and lead external audits

The OFI must be present and lead external audits of the BCP.
Organisations that can carry out audits include:

- Animal and Plant Health Authority (APHA)
- Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

Ensure the BCP is managed in a hygienic manner

The OFI must ensure that the BCP is managed in a hygienic manner, in compliance with the retained EU Hygiene Regulations for the fish and fishery

commodities concerned, and that the conduct of required controls at the BCP does not pose a biosecurity risk to the consignments being handled.

Liaise with Customs officials

It is the responsibility of Border Force:

- To enforce import controls when an import has not been notified to a BCP
- To check customs warehouses, manifests and ships' stores for third country animal products which have not been notified to a BCP, and
- To take appropriate action to identify consignments that have not been notified or presented to any BCP.

The OFI liaises with Customs officials to:

- ensure that adequate measures are in place to identify smuggled fishery products
- prevent unchecked fishery products leaving the port or airport
- advise of any increased risks identified from rejected consignments

Record follow-up actions for consignments

The OFI must ensure that CHEDs for all consignments requiring follow-up actions - for example, channelled goods, re-exports or destroyed goods - are recorded in the follow-up register and resolved as required.

If the OFI does not receive confirmation that the consignment has fulfilled the required follow-up actions (has reached its destination, been re-exported, or has been destroyed), they will need to investigate what has happened.

Responsibilities of the Port Health Authority

At each BCP, the Port Health Authority (PHA) is responsible for enforcing regulatory controls. PHA staff are usually employees of the Local Authority where the import Point of Entry for that BCP is located. Some LAs provide PHA services for BCPs at other locations, under local service agreements. PHA roles and duties include:

Providing sufficient staff

The PHA must ensure that sufficient official veterinarians (OVs), official fish inspectors (OFIs), animal health officers (AHOs) and other non-veterinary staff resources are provided at each BCP for which they are responsible, to permit the checks required under Official Controls Regulation 2017/625 to be carried out effectively.

Provide the equipment necessary for control activities

The PHA must ensure the necessary equipment is available at BCPs to enable all checks required under the Official Controls Regulation and the Implementing Regulations 2019/1014 can be carried out effectively.

Cleaning and hygiene at the BCP

The PHA must ensure that the BCP is maintained and managed in a hygienic manner, consistent with OCR requirements and with the retained EU Hygiene Regulations for the consignments being handled.

Collect charges

The PHA will ensure that charges - as laid down in Annex IV of the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625 -

CA is responsible to recover costs

Liaise with APHA CIT

For POAO issues, the PHA should liaise initially with the Animal and Plant Health Agency Centre for International Trade (APHA CIT), if support or advice is needed where a problem has been detected with a consignment or with the BCP facilities. If required, CIT may refer issues on for specific advice from Defra.

Perform regulatory enforcement responsibilities on international catering waste

The PHA is responsible for enforcement action where port-side deficiencies on handling international catering waste are identified by APHA or equivalent relevant Agency.

Avoid conflicts of interest

The PHA must ensure that procedures are in operation, to check that BCP staff (including OVs, OFIs, technical officers and clerical staff) do not have any conflicts of interest, in line with Article 5 of the Official Controls Regulations 2017/625.

Ensure checks meet GB law

The PHA must verify that the checks carried out by OVs and OFIs meet the requirements of OCR legislation, in particular the elements covered by Chapter 5 of the Official Controls Regulations 2017/625, as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Carry out verification checks

The PHA ensures that verification checks are conducted, as required by Article 5 1(a) of the Official Controls Regulations 2017/625.

Recommended actions

Recommended actions for each PHA include:

- **Flexible contracts for OVs and OFIs**
  The PHA should aim to ensure that direct contracts with OVs, or with companies providing OV services, are flexible enough to respond to to changes in trade patterns.
  Ideally, contracts should not set out a fixed amount of OV time per week/year, unless this can be changed in response to changes in import throughput at the BCP.
- **Conduct of audits**

  Checks and procedures carried out at BCPs are subject to both internal and independent audits. The audit body (APHA, other Agency, or PHA) must ensure that any issues highlighted by an audit are addressed effectively within an agreed timetable, to maintain the designated status of the BCP.

- **Address non-compliance**

  If a BCP operator does not take the necessary steps to comply with the regulatory requirements for all import categories for which the BCP is desi designated, the PHA will take appropriate actions to resolve the issue, which may include serving an official improvement notice to the operator of the BCP.

  APHA must be informed of any formal improvement notice served to a BCP operator by the relevant PHA. If the requirements in the notice are not met, APHA may suspend the approval of the BCP.

Responsibilities of the Border Control Post Operator

Responsibilities for BCP operators generally include the following:

Maintaining the BCP facilities

Operators must ensure buildings, test areas and other facilities in the BCP are maintained to a suitable standard. This will include ensuring that operational equipment is working (for example, temperature-controlled areas and equipment), any general repairs to BCP infrastructure are carried out promptly, and facilities are always sufficiently cleaned and disinfected.

At some BCPs operators are also responsible for cargo handling (opening containers, unloading and loading consignments), as well as making sure consignments are maintained at the correct temperature while inside the facility, stored or otherwise.

Some BCP operators are also responsible for providing cargo handling equipment, such as tools to open and unload containers, forklift trucks, trolleys, etc.

Carry out repairs

Operators must ensure any repair or maintenance requested by the official inspector or port health authority (PHA) is carried out promptly.

Apply for new BCP facilities, or amendments to designated BCPs

Operators wishing to:

- construct and seek formal designation for a new BCP, or
- amend an existing BCP in any way - including changes to the currently designated import categories (increasing or reducing designated categories), or changes to the import handling capacity of designated BCPs (expanding or reducing the size of facilities)

- must submit an Expression of Interest to the Appropriate Authority for formal approval of the initial proposal - which, if approved, will allow the operator to engage with the Competent Authority, who will advise and ultimately sign the final audit permitting formal designation by the Appropriate Authority (Defra, or the Devolved Administrations of Scotland and Wales).

Enforcement authorities at a Border Control Post

The enforcement authority at a BCP as TARP defines them are country councils, district councils, Port Health Authorities, London Boroughs (or, in the City of London, the Common Council of the City of London), metropolitan districts and unitary authorities.

n whose area the BCP is located.

Outside a BCP or Customs area

For import consignments, the enforcement authorities are:

- the District Council (except for animal feed, for which the relevant County Council is the enforcement authority)
- the Food Standards Agency (FSA) or Food Standards Scotland (FSS), at any place where these Agencies enforce the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 in England, or equivalent domestic legislation in Scotland or Wales

Any consignment outside the BCP but still within the relevant Customs Zone for the point of entry will be the responsibility of Customs / Border Force.
If consignments which have not been presented or pre-notified are discovered at the import consignment's Point of Entry to Great Britain (including external temporary storage facilities and Custom warehouses in or near the port or airport), the Official Inspector at the BCP should inform Border Force for appropriate enforcement action to be taken.

Points of entry without a BCP

Customs officials are the enforcement authority for products found at any point of entry into GB with no BCP.
If a Border Force officer thinks that a commercial consignment should come under import controls, they should:

- detain the products
- Notify the LA Food safety Team before taking the appropriate enforcement action for an illegal entry.

Products found inland

Consignments discovered inland that have not met the relevant biosecurity control requirements on entry should be handled by the inland local authority in which they are discovered. The consignment should be seized in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011.

Seizure of products of animal origin (POAO)

The person responsible for the consignment must pay the final costs of any actions taken, including additional treatment, storage, destruction, or sampling.

Appointing official vets and fish inspectors

The Secretary of State for Defra must ratify that individual veterinary surgeons are suitably trained to be official veterinary surgeons for any BCP designated to import POAO.

The District Council for an area with a BCP designated to import products must appoint suitably trained veterinary surgeons (as ratified above) to be official veterinarians for the consignments designated at that BCP.

If the BCP is only approved for animal by-products, either the Secretary of State or the District Council can appoint a veterinarian or inspector.

If the BCP is approved for fishery products or composite products that only contain processed fishery products, and only those for human consumption, the council can appoint an environmental health officer (or suitably trained individual) to act as an Official Fish Inspector.

Powers of enforcement officers

Under Regulation 34 of TARP a government or enforcement official can:

- inspect and examine any animal
- inspect any product or genetic material, including its packaging, seals, marking, labelling and presentation, and any plant or equipment used for or in connection with it
- have access to, inspect and copy any documents or records (in whatever form they are held), and remove them to be copied
- have access to, inspect and check the operation of any computer and any associated apparatus used in connection with the records, and may require any computer records to be produced in a form in which they may be taken away
- seize and retain anything required as evidence in proceedings under the Regulations
- open any bundle, package, packing case, or item of personal luggage, or require any person in possession of or accompanying the same to open it and inspect the contents
- take samples of any animal or product for laboratory tests, for checking against any relevant document relating to the animal or product or otherwise for checking compliance with the Regulations or any condition of import enforced by the Regulations

If officials need to make further checks, they may seize or hold a consignment without issuing a Common Health Entry Document (CHED).

The person responsible for the consignment must pay any storage costs.

Powers of entry to premises

Under Regulation 33 of TARP, an authorised government or enforcement agency officer can enter BCP premises at any reasonable time without prior notice. BCP premises can include a vehicle, trailer, container, stall, moveable structure, ship or aircraft.

Enforcement officers cannot enter a private residence unless they have a warrant from a local magistrate.

A magistrate may sign a warrant to permit an enforcement officer to enter any premises, including a private residence, if the magistrate is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to enter those premises for the purpose of enforcing the Regulations, and that one or more of the following conditions apply:

- entry to the premises has been, or is likely to be, refused, and notice of the intention to apply for a warrant has been given to the occupier
- asking for admission to the premises, or giving such a notice, would defeat the object of the entry
- entry is required urgently
- the premises are unoccupied, or the occupier is temporarily absent.

The warrant is valid for 30 days from when it is signed.
An authorised officer may:

- be accompanied by up to 3 other people that they consider necessary
- bring any necessary equipment onto the premises

An authorised officer entering any premises that are unoccupied, or from which the occupier is temporarily absent, must leave them as effectively secured against unauthorised entry as they were before the officer's entry.

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - overview

All consignments of products of animal origin (POAO) must be checked at a BCP before they enter Great Britain. These checks include:

- documentary checks
- identity checks
- physical checks

Importers must pay the cost of any checks.

Products that must be checked

Checks must be carried out on all products listed in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2007.

Goods that are being returned to GB from any other country must be checked. All fresh fishery products from non-EU-flagged vessels must be checked.

Where and how checks must be carried out

All products subject to full identity checks, except for sealed checks, must be moved to the BCP inspection facility for these checks to take place. If the identity check is only a seal check, the product does not need to go to the inspection facility, but the seal check can be done at a designated seal check area.

All physical checks must take place at the BCP facility.

If consignments are mixed - for example, products of animal origin in a consignment alongside fruit or vegetables - the consignment must be split prior to checking. The separation should be carried out by the staff identified for this role at the relevant BCP (eg, port operator staff, PHA staff).

Checks at a BCP or designated inspection facility

Checks must:

- take temperature conditions and maintenance of temperature control chains into account
- take place under cover from the weather
- not cross-contaminate other goods in a consignment

Checks must be carried out at BCPs that are both designated and specifically equipped for the relevant consignments. For example:

- checks on germinal products must be done at a product BCP
- live fish and aquaculture products, and snails for direct human consumption, must be checked at a product BCP
- checks on fish eggs must be done at a live animal BCP
- checks on avian hatching eggs and SPF eggs can be done at a live animal or product BCP

Checks at a different location

Seal checks outside the BCP inspection facility should be carried out in a location specifically approved for this purpose by APHA.
In very rare cases, the relevant OFI at a BCP may decide that checks need to be done elsewhere, if movement to the BCP:

- would constitute an animal or public health risk or a health and safety risk
- could damage the product
- would be impractical, in the professional judgement of the OV

Where any of these circumstances may apply, the OV should contact their APHA liaison officer immediately, so the situation can be assessed.

When checks can be postponed

The BCP must meet hygiene, safety and other requirements.

If there is a problem at a BCP, the OV must decide if this could affect the integrity of the products to be checked.

The OV can postpone carrying out checks until the issue has been resolved.

If any staff at a BCP identify operational or legal compliance issues, they should inform the Port Health Authority (PHA) and APHA as soon as possible.

The PHA may serve **a notice of non-compliance** to the operator responsible for the facility. APHA and OVs must be informed of such a notice.
APHA may recommend to Defra or the devolved administration that the designation of the BCP is suspended or withdrawn if non-compliance continues or is not resolved by the operator according to the conditions in the notice.

Exceptions to checks

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2122 sets out the categories of animals and goods that are exempt from veterinary checks at BCPs.
Although these products do not have to be checked at the BCP, they are still subject to national biosecurity controls. For example, research and diagnostic samples require an authorisation under The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011 and may be checked at destination.
Consignments do not have to be checked if they are to be transhipped to another Border Control Post (BCP) within the following time limits:

- 3 days for goods subject to animal health requirements at airports
- 30 days for goods subject to animal health requirements at seaports
- 90 days for goods not subject to animal health requirements at both airports and seaports

Checks do not have to be performed on:

- personal imports that are part of travellers' luggage, and are below the specified weight limits for such commodities, allowing them to be treated as personal imports
- small consignments sent to a non-commercial recipient, as long as they are for human consumption and come from a country approved to send such products to GB
- incoming ship or aircraft stores, brought in on one vessel or aircraft for direct transfer to another within the same port or airport
- research and diagnostic samples, which must be authorised by APHA CIT before importation
- certain
- composite products that contain no meat products and meet the requirements of Annex II of retained EU Commission Decision 2007/275

as amended by The Import of, and Trade in, Animals and Animal Products (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, or the derogated products listed in Article 6 of 2007/275/EC.

Fresh fishery products

Any point of entry where fishing vessels from non-GB countries land fresh fishery products must be **a designated port** in line with illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing rules, and with the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) scheme of Control and Enforcement. The port does not need to be a designated BCP.

Fresh fishery products are defined as unprocessed fishery products, whether whole or prepared, including products packaged under vacuum or in a modified atmosphere, that have not undergone any treatment to ensure preservation other than chilling.

Consignments requiring post-import controls

The requirements for monitoring goods, and the actions required by the PHA and APHA in respect of monitored consignments, are set out in Article 77 of Regulation 2017/625 and Regulation 2019/1666:

- The consignee should confirm to APHA within 24 hours of receiving the goods.
- APHA should complete controls on IPAFFS within 15 days. The Official Inspector should follow up monitored consignments to ensure this control has been applied.
- If the control has not been applied within 15 days, the Official Inspector should contact APHA CIT.

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - access to information at the Border Control Post

BCP staff must ensure that the following up-to-date information is available (or accessible online) at the BCP, until the information is confirmed as uploaded and available on the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS).

Access to current lists of:

- countries (European Union) and Rest of World), or parts of countries, authorised to dispatch products to Great Britain
- establishments in countries (EU and RoW) authorised to dispatch products to GB)
- national authorised establishments for non-harmonised products
- approved GB BCPs and their contact details
- approved EU BCPs
- United Kingdom establishments that can receive monitored products:
    - animal by-product (ABP) premises approved or registered by Defra
    - food for human consumption approved by Local Authorities, FSA or FSS
- UK approved free zones

Copies of or access to the latest versions of:

- legislation containing copies of the model health certificates
- all documents which must accompany products dispatched to GB
- any safeguard decisions that prohibit or restrict imports to GB
- relevant UK legislation for products and procedures covered by veterinary checks

Other relevant documents, including OVS notes and Import information notes, are provided by:

- the Food Standards Agency for fishery and aquaculture products
- APHA CIT for all other animal products

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - notification of arrival and presentation requirements

The person responsible for the consignment (eg, importer or agent) must notify the Border Control Post at the consignment's Point of Entry (port, airport, rail terminal) into GB, in advance of the consignment's arrival.

If the consignment has been selected for biosecurity checks, it must be presented to the BCP without delay as soon as it is offloaded at the Point of Entry.

Pre-notifying and arriving at a BCP

The person responsible for the consignment must:

- make sure that all products go to a BCP specifically designated to accept such consignments
- pre-notify the BCP before the consignment is due to arrive, by completing Part 1 of the Common Health Entry Document (CHED)

Pre-notification must be done at least one working day before the consignment is due to arrive. If one working day is not possible, notification of the time of arrival must be made at least 4 hours in advance, This needs to be agreed in-advance with the specific PHA.The person responsible for the consignment must provide evidence of a logistical constraint that prevented the one working day notification being given.

Logistical constraints may include:

- cancellations
- short notice booking changes
- IT errors

BCP officials will take a decision on whether the evidence is enough to justify a late notification.

Consignments arriving without pre-notification are classed as illegal.
If the Official Inspector at the BCP is not satisfied with the reason for giving a late notification, appropriate action will be taken.

A warning letter may be sent to the person responsible for the consignment, with reference to Regulation 14 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products

(TARP) Regulations 2011. The letter is also copied to the Port Health Authority responsible for the BCP.

The PHA may decide to follow enforcement procedures for persistent infringement.

Pre-notification using the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS)

The person responsible for the consignment must pre-notify the consignment, by using IPAFFS to submit Part 1 of the CHED. Pre-notification cannot be made by telephone.

Pre-notification for transhipped consignments in GB

Under certain circumstances, the Official Inspector at the BCP of entry may defer the documentary and identity checks to a second BCP within GB, as long as the consignment is transhipped directly to the second BCP.

In such cases, the person responsible for the consignment must pre-notify the Official Inspector at the BCP of destination regarding:

- the estimated time of arrival
- the BCP at which the consignment will be checked
- the identification and location of the consignment - including product type and country of export, to allow the receiving BCP to determine whether it is authorised to receive the type of transhipment
- the estimated time of departure from the BCP of entry

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - manifest checks

HMRC and Border Force are responsible for detecting smuggled animal products at the border, including products that are not declared to the BCP. BCP staff should have access to manifests and other similar information maintained by the port operator or users.

The Official Inspector should:

- be able to check on manifests whenever they need to identify anything that might require veterinary checks
- be aware of any Border Force operations to detect undeclared products

Processes at the BCP

The BCP must have processes in place for:

- identifying any consignment moving through the port or airport that may contain products of animal origin
- stopping suspicious consignments and supporting Border Force in taking necessary measures

This is so that the inspector has free access to necessary information for all consignments carried on the specific means of transport.
These processes should cover both consignments intended for import and those for transit, transhipment, or warehousing.

Driver Messaging

Driver messaging: From April 2024, hauliers and drivers moving Sanitary and Phytosanitary goods into the country using the Goods Vehicle Movement Services (GVMS) to clear customs will be notified of inspection requirements and location via the existing Inspection Location Service. In cases where Sanitary and Phytosanitary goods being imported under CTC transit are required to attend an inspection a new IPAFFS messaging service will be utilised. The alerts will be delivered by text or email depending on the contact details provided when the CHED prenotification is submitted.

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - removing products from Border Control Posts

Importers must ensure that products which are subject to official controls are not removed from the Border Control Post (BCP) where they entered GB, until a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) with satisfactory results has been completed.

If the BCP is closed, goods can be unloaded and stored in a port area Internal temporary storage facility (ITSF) until the BCP reopens.

Where the BCP is located at a road, rail, or port location, storage of the goods in the means of transport may be permitted under the control of the relevant Competent Authority (eg APHA, FSA, FSS).

External temporary storage facilities (ETSF) cannot be used.

Unchecked consignments discovered at the Point of Entry

Consignments discovered at the port or airport (including ETSF, and Custom Warehouses in or near the port or airport) that have not been presented for inspection or pre-notified are deemed to be **illegal**, and may be seized and liable to forfeiture.

Border Force should serve a Regulation 32 (6) notice and inform the Official Veterinarian (OV).

Border Force is responsible for seizure action. The Border Force officer will detain the products and notify the Port Health Authority, or Local Authority food safety team before taking further action against the consignment.

Unchecked consignments discovered inland

Consignments discovered inland that have not been checked on entry cannot then be returned or redirected to a BCP to undergo checks. Any such consignments should be handled by the relevant inland local authority, and seized in accordance with Regulation 19 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011.

Details of the unchecked consignment should be passed to the Border Force National Intelligence Hub.

Email:
BorderForceNationalIntelligenceHub@homeoffice.gov.uk
BFNIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - documentary checks

A documentary check is defined in the Official Controls Regulation as "examination of the official certificates, official attestations and other documents including documents of a commercial nature, which are required to accompany the consignment".

The documentary check will confirm that documents conform to the detail of the conditions for import.

All consignments must undergo a documentary check.
Documentary checks must confirm:

- the final destination of the goods
- that the goods have been appropriately certified
- that the goods are in accordance with the intended use

Every consignment intended for import must have a documentary check to ensure that the notification and the Health Certificate agree.

Checks must be performed to confirm that:

- official certificates, official attestations and other documents with further details that might be required for the type of product
- certificates are originals and bear a unique code
- official certificates have been issued by the competent authority of the exporting country
- the country of origin is authorised for the type of import of import commodity to GB
- the certificate presented conforms to the model on GOV.UK
- certificates identify the person who signed them, together with the date of issue
- the importer has completed Part 1 of the CHED, providing the information necessary for the immediate and complete identification of the consignment and its destination
- the commodity, country and establishment of origin are not currently subject to safeguard measures

The agent must be notified if there are discrepancies on the CHED.
For non-transiting imports, original documents must be retained by the Competent Authority for up to 3 years from receipt.

For transiting goods, the original documents must accompany the load. Certified copies of these documents must be made and retained by the Competent Authority.

Certificates accompanying consignments.

Certificates accompanying consignments must be:

- legible
- originals (except for commercial documents such as Bills of Lading)
- written in English, or with an English translation

Certificates must be dated, stamped, and signed by either:

- an official veterinarian (OV)
- another representative of the competent authority, if the rules for a particular product allow it

Further information about documentary checks can be found in Regulation (EU) 2019/2130, as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Changes to certificates

Certificates must be legible.

Any alterations to certificates must be closely examined to determine whether this is an attempt to defraud. Liquid paper or correction products must not be used, as use of these will invalidate the certificate.

Any alterations to a certificate should be:

- crossed through (not obliterated) or left out
- stamped and signed by the person who originally signed the certificate

Changes marked by initials may be accepted at the discretion of the OFI

Replacement certificates

Where an original certificate has been lost or destroyed, the competent authority of the exporting country should ideally submit a replacement certificate but may be permitted to provide an authenticated copy of the original certificate.

Replacement certificates should be used only in specific circumstances, as determined by the issuing authority - namely:

- administrative errors in the original certificate
- damage or loss of the original certificate.

Replacement certificates should not be used for more fundamental problems, such as misrepresentation of the consignment. Replacement certificates should include the reference number of the cancelled certificate.

The replacement certificate must not modify information in the initial certificate concerning the identification, traceability, and health guarantees of consignments.

The replacement certificate must:

- make clear reference to the unique code referred to in Article 89(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and the date of issue of the initial certificate
- clearly state that it replaces the initial certificate
- have a new certificate number different to that of the initial certificate
- include the date on which the replacement certificate was issued
- be presented in its original form to the competent authorities - except in the case of electronic replacement certificates submitted in IMSOC (the EU IT system)

These requirements are in line with Article 5 of retained EU Regulation 2019/628.

Validated PDFs

The EU is transitioning from paper-based certification with handwritten signatures, to digital certification, with electronic signatures. As of 31st January 2024, verifiable PDF’s will be accepted for live animals and POAO imports

from EU and EFTA countries where the PDF health certificate can be electronically verified.

These certificates must be created directly in either TRACES or an equivalent EU / EFTA Member State's National SPS Export System. The PDF certificate downloaded from TRACES or other approved EU/EFTA country systems must be uploaded to IPAFFS. Countries Great Britain will accept validated PDF GB health certificates from - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

PDF Health Certificates can only be created in approved systems, which include TRACES and equivalent national SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) Export Systems. The UK Government maintains a list of countries whose validated PDFs are accepted and specifies which system is required for each country.

A verifiable PDF is an e-signed and e-sealed Export Health Certificate that is generated in an approved exporting Competent Authority system. These certificated can be validated against the original digital certification in the official database. If provided, there is no need for a paper copy to accompany the consignment.

How do I check that the health certificate has been digitally signed?

A verifiable PDF is a certificate issued electronically from the consigned country's system, it has a QR code and/or hyperlink that allows GB inspectors to validate the status of the certificate.

4) What do I need to do if a hand-signed or non-digital certificate is provided?

Trader:

Hand-signed paper certificates can still be used and remain as a valid form of certification. A scanned copy of this should be uploaded to the IPAFFS notification, and the original paper copy must accompany the consignment. The scanned copy of the certificate must include any schedules and accompanying documents that are certified alongside the health certificate.

If a paper certificate is used between January 31 and April 30, the importer in GB should retain the original once the goods arrive.

5) **How do I attach a digital/ verifiable PDF certificate to my IPAFFs notification**?

After an exporter applies for an EHC, the competent authority is responsible for issuing the electronically signed certificate.

The PDF certificate downloaded from TRACES or other approved EU/EFTA country systems must be uploaded to IPAFFS.

The exporter is responsible for sending the validated PDF to the importer/agent.

The Importer is responsible for creating the IPAFFS notification and uploading the verifiable PDF.

Re-dispatched consignments

When a consignment has been rejected and the importer has decided to re-dispatch the consignment, the certification must be stamped ‘unacceptable for entry’ on each page and returned to the importer.

Documentary checks checklist

Best practice recommends that a checklist is used when documentary checks are carried out. The official who made the checks must sign and date it.

Sealed retail packages of mixed products

For sealed retail packages of mixed products that may contain products of animal origin (POAO) - for example, mixed buffet selection trays with a combination of meat and vegetarian items, each POAO should have its own certificate.

Mixed product packages should be treated as one consignment. If one of the POAO is not compliant, the whole consignment must be rejected as it is not possible to split the package.

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - identity checks

An identity check is defined in Article 3 of the Official Controls Regulation (OCR) as:

> "a visual inspection, to verify that the content and the labelling of a consignment, including the marks on animals, seals and means of transport, correspond to the information provided in the official certificates, official attestations and other documents accompanying it."

BCP identity checks are performed in line with the specific risk-based requirements for all types of commodities and countries of origin, which are set out in legislation. The higher the inherent risk of the import commodity, and/or risk factors relating to the country of origin, the more likely it is that full identity checks will be required.

Consignments that are transhipped within the minimum time intervals specified in regulations are exempt from identity checks.

Detailed regulations for carrying out identity checks are set out in Article 3 of Implementing Regulation 2019/2130, and as amended by 2020/1481 The official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Conducting an identity check

An identity check involves checking that the stamps, official marks, official labelling and health or identification marks on the product or its packaging match with those recorded in the IPAFFS documents for the consignment. Checks must be performed on a sample of packages taken from throughout the consignment. The check should not be restricted to boxes immediately accessible from the transports access

Checkers should select at least 1% of the items or packages in a consignment for identity checks, with a minimum of 2 and up to a maximum of 10 items or packages.

If it is not possible to complete the identity checks based on the selected items or packages, the number of items can be increased in order to perform more extensive checks, up to the total amount of packages in the consignment if necessary.

Official Inspectors must choose the packages or containers on which to conduct identity checks. Do not allow importers or their agents to suggest which parts of a consignment are to be checked at the BCP.

Official Inspectors can require goods to be unloaded from their consignment transport if access to the whole consignment is needed for the identity checks to be conducted.

Consignments that require identity checks

Identity checks are needed for products of animal origin (POAO), germinal products, animal by-products (ABP), derived products, hay and straw, and composite products.

Checks on container seals or on the means of transport may be sufficient, as long as:

- the goods are in closed, locked, and sealed transport units
- the seals are intact and were fixed by or under the supervision of the competent authority in the country of origin issuing the official certificate
- information on the seal matches the accompanying official certificate, required by Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (as amended by 2020/1481 The official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020).

Seal checks to be conducted outside the BCP facility should be carried out in a location specifically approved for this purpose by APHA.

Full ID checks

If the Official Inspector determines that a consignment needs more than a seal-only identity check, the container will be opened for a full ID check. Containers must be opened if:

- the container is not sealed
- the seal number does not appear to have been recorded by the veterinary authorities - for example, if it appears to have been added later by the transporter or importer
- there was a lack of control by the competent authority when the certificate was signed, Look at the quality of completion of the HC or any discrepancies in the timing
-
- required information has been omitted - for example, the number of packages is not recorded on the paperwork

Incorrect seal numbers may result in the rejection of the consignment.

Consignments that do not need identity checks

An identity check does not need to be performed if a consignment will be transhipped to another BCP within:

- 3 days - for goods subject to animal health requirements at airports
- 30 days - for goods subject to animal health requirements at seaports
- 90 days - for goods not subject to animal health requirements at both airports and seaports

An identity check must still be performed on these types of consignments, if the Official Inspector believes that they are non-compliant.
Further information on identity checks can be found in:

- rules on consignments that do not need identity checks
- guidance on transhipments and transits
- legislation about transhipments

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - physical checks

A physical check is defined (in Article 3 of the Official Controls Regulation) as: “a check on animals or goods and, as appropriate, checks on packaging, the means of transport, labelling and temperature, the sampling for analysis, testing or diagnosis and any other check necessary to verify compliance with the rules referred to in Article 1(2)”.

Carrying out physical checks

Physical checks must be carried out at a Border Control Post. The Official Inspector must:

- ensure the products still meet the purpose stated on the health certificate or document (including on IPAFFS)
- verify the guarantees of origin certified by the exporting country
- check the integrity of the packaging material
- open the packaging to conduct physical checks on the products contained within them
- check that the condition of the products has not changed on their journey

This can be done by:

- examining their smell, colour, consistency and taste
- simple physical or chemical tests - for example, cutting, thawing or cooking
- laboratory tests to detect residues, pathogens, contaminants or evidence of alteration
- examining records of temperature range during transport

The detailed rules for carrying out physical checks are laid out in Article 4 and Annex II of Implementing Regulation 2019/2130, as amended by SI 2020/1481.

When must a consignment be physically checked?

Official inspectors can carry out any checks they believe to be appropriate, where they suspect that import requirements have not been complied with, or there is some other doubt about the consignment or its destination.
The baseline frequency rates for identity and physical checks on consignments are determined through scientific assessments, and are set out in Annex 1 of Regulation 2019/2129, as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

The frequency of checks can be increased on certain products from certain other countries for a limited period of time - for instance, as a result of an outbreak of disease in that country. In these circumstances, each BCP will be notified in writing by Defra, Food Standards Agency or Food Standards Scotland, of any temporary increase on the level of checks required.

The frequency of checks may be decreased in the case of equivalence agreements for a particular country, or in certain exceptional cases. For exceptional cases Defra, FSA or FSS will notify the BCP in writing.

Selecting packages for a physical check

Checks must be performed on a sample of packages taken from throughout the consignment. The check should not be restricted to boxes immediately visible or accessible from the transports access point

At least 1% of the items or packages in a consignment should be selected for checks, with a minimum of 2 and up to a maximum of 10 items or packages. These can be the same packages that have been selected for identity checks.

If it is not possible to complete the checks based on the selected items or packages, the number of items can be increased to perform more extensive checks - up to the total amount of packages in the consignment if necessary.

BCP inspectors must decide which packages or containers to check. Shippers must not dictate which parts of a consignment to check.

Inspectors can ask for some or all goods to be unloaded from their means of transport, if full access to the whole consignment is required.

Food and feed samples

Food and feed samples must be sent to an approved official control laboratory designated by FSS or FSA, in line with Article 37 of the Regulation (EU) 2017/625.
Results from sampling must be added to the CHED on IPAFFS once received.

Legislation for physical checks

Further legislation relating to physical checks can be found in the following regulations:

- Article 52 and 54 of Regulation 2017/625 - general rules as amended by Part 2 Amendments to Regulation (EU) 2017/625
- Implementing Regulation 2019/2130 - Rules for documentary, identity and physical checks as amended by Amendments to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2130 establishing detailed rules on the operations to be carried out during and after documentary checks, identity checks and physical checks on animals and goods subject to official controls at border control posts
- Implementing Regulation 2019/2129 - Frequency of checks as amended by Amendments to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/2129 establishing rules for the uniform application of frequency rates for identity checks and physical checks on certain consignments of animals and goods entering the Union

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - monitored consignments needing post-import controls

[*17 December 2023*] – this section is currently under substantive revision. The Manual will be updated shortly with fully updated new guidance content on monitored consignments.

If you have an urgent query relating to checks and controls on monitored consignments, for imports currently at or scheduled to arrive shortly at your BCP, please contact the BCPManual@defra.gov.uk inbox, or imports@apha.gov.uk - or call APHA CIT on 03000 200 301

Procedures for Veterinary Checks – the National Monitoring Plan

All Border Control Posts must have a plan to monitor imported products of animal origin (POAO) for hazards. These hazards include:

- residues
- pathogenic organisms
- other substances dangerous to humans, animals or the environment

The National Monitoring Plan (NMP) is a flexible risk-based plan, covering POAO only. Live animals and animal by-products are separately monitored by Defra.

Regulation 2019/2130 sets out what must be included in the NMP.

BCP monitoring plans

BCP monitoring plans should cover all contaminants and POAO listed in the NMP.

Where the throughput of specific goods is zero or extremely low, it is acceptable to have a plan which requires that no samples will need to be taken until throughput rises to a specified level.

If the BCP is already monitoring a product in the NMP for another reason, separate samples of the same product do not need to be taken as part of the NMP.

BCPs can use local knowledge and intelligence to decide which products to monitor as part of their plan.

More information about products and contaminants which BCPs must plan to monitor as part of the NMP can be found on the FSA website.

Making a return for the NMP

BCPs do not need to make a separate return for the NMP.
To make a return for the NMP, Official Inspectors should select the ‘Random’ option for the sample on Box 29 (laboratory tests) of the Common Health Entry Document (CHED) on IPAFFS. Selecting the ‘Random’ option on IPAFFS will submit the results automatically to the NMP and allows the FSA to search for and extract NMP data from the IPAFFS system.

Official inspectors must report ‘unsatisfactory’ results immediately, using the Border Notification process on IPAFFS.

Recovering costs from importers

BCPs can recover sampling costs from importers in two situations:

1. When taking samples as part of the NMP
   BCPs must include the cost of taking NMP samples in the overall cost of veterinary checks that local and port health authorities charge to importers.
2. When taking samples under safeguard measures
   BCPs can charge importers for samples if they take those samples as part of safeguard measures, including Intensified Official Controls.
   This could happen if there has been:

   - a problem with a POAO in another country
   - a prohibited residue or harmful substance in a previous consignment from an importer

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - products that leave a BCP before receiving test results

Sometimes samples are taken for tests where the results will not be known for a few days at least. In such cases, the Official Inspector cannot provide a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) and goods will not be able to leave the BCP, if the testing:

- is for a substance or pathogenic agent that could directly risk animal or public health
- has been done because of previous failed tests (including any subject to Regulation 2019/1873 as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020)

Pending test results can be viewed by logging in to the Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS).

Consignments should not be detained while waiting for test results if they are sampled as part of routine sampling at the BCP, or sampled for the National Monitoring Plan (NMP) in line with Article 4.8 of Regulation 2019/2130.

For consignments that have been tested and placed on the market before laboratory test results are available, the competent authorities at the BCP must record in IPAFFS all results of laboratory analyses, tests or diagnoses as soon as they are available, in line with Article 5.2 of Regulation 2019/2130. The Official Inspector should also notify

- the importer(s) of these consignments, and
- the Local Authority for the consignment's delivery destination after leaving the BCP.

Procedures for Veterinary Checks - the Common Health Entry Document

The Common Health Entry Document (CHED) is an electronic document, recording all of the import control data that was previously set out in 'hard copy' paper documentation. For imports to GB, the CHED is created when an importer (or their agent) uses the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) to notify GB of their intention to import a consignment.

The OCR Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/1715 sets out legal requirements for the information management system recording official controls on POAO (and other products), which are entered by the relevant importer and Official Inspector creating and completing a CHED in IPAFFS for each import consignment.

The CHED is the official document confirming that all official biosecurity controls required for specific import consignments have been completed. By creating a CHED on IPAFFS, the correct and unique documentation for each commodity in a consignment is automatically linked to that consignment throughout its GB import journey – and any data on the CHED is linked to the unique ID of each individual who enters information on it in IPAFFS.

The CHED should be completed in English.

CHEDs must meet both the specifications set out in Regulation 2019/1715, and basic quality standards, including those set by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS).

Although the specific EU Regulation 2019/1715 was disapplied in Great Britain following our exit from the EU, Official Inspectors and other BCP staff who are unfamiliar with CHEDs may find the explanations of CHED data fields in Annex 1 of the Regulation, and the examples of CHED templates in Annex 2, are helpful in developing their understanding of the CHED process.

CHED basic principles

A CHED is used by:

- **importers or agents** - to notify BCPs of an incoming import consignment, by completing Part 1 of the CHED.
- **BCP officials** - to record official import controls and decisions for that consignment, by completing Part 2 of the CHED.

The importer or agent responsible for a consignment must use IPAFFS to complete the relevant sections of Part 1 of the CHED - to record details of the consignment and its entry destination, and to enable prompt notification of the incoming import consignment to the relevant point of entry and BCP.

Official Inspectors at BCPs must also use IPAFFS to complete Part 2 of the CHED, to record:

- any official controls such as documentary, identity or physical checks or samples taken
- the results of such controls, and
- the decision on the consignment – is it approved to leave the BCP, or rejected for failure to pass the relevant controls.

If rejected, the CHED includes options to select confirming the reason for rejection, the next steps (e.g., destruction, re-dispatch, or transformation (repurposing the consignment), and the date by which this action needs to be completed.

The Official Inspector will finalise the CHED on IPAFFS, once the appropriate POAO import checks have been performed.

Customs officials will only release a consignment for onward transport (i.e., permission to exit the BCP) once the CHED has been finalised.

If a Customs declaration[1] is made for a consignment that requires official controls but does not have a CHED, Customs authorities must detain the consignment and immediately notify the Official Inspector at the BCP.

[1] The customs declaration is the official document, lodged by an importer or their agent, to notify Customs of their intention to import goods, including details of the import consignment.

Customs officers must list the Official Inspector assessment before taking any action against the consignment, in accordance with Article 66 of the OCR 2017/625 and Regulation 32 (6) of TARP – as described in the rejected consignments section of this Manual.

How to complete a CHED

The Official Inspector must complete Part 2 of the CHED and finalise the completed CHED on IPAFFS. This confirms the required official controls for that consignment have been carried out, and the identity of the official who has confirmed this (as all IPAFFS users are assigned a unique ID that identifies all actions they take on the system – in effect, an electronic 'signature').

Should IPAFFS be unavailable for any reason (e.g., local power outage, or central server technical issues), each BCP is required - as part of their designation audit – to have contingency operational procedures setting out how controls will be maintained during the IPAFFS downtime.

CHEDs, and any related health certificates or documents from other countries, should all be recorded on IPAFFS, where they are electronically archived for a minimum of seven years.

Official Inspectors – completing Part 2 of the CHED

The Official Inspector must record on the CHED which OCR-required checks have been carried out for each consignment needing checks (i.e., document checks, then identity checks and physical checks if required).

The Official Inspector should finalise the CHED on IPAFFS when:

- all the required official controls have been completed and recorded on the CHED
- Confirmation is provided that the relevant fees have been paid, or a guarantee of payment has been received by the PHA, in line with Annex IV of the Official Controls Regulation.

The CHED must not be finalised until the BCP Official Inspector is satisfied that all the import conditions have been met.

Multiple certificates and split consignments

In most instances, the Official Inspector should treat consignments covered by more than one animal or public health certificate as separate or split and require the importer to complete a CHED for each part of the consignment for which there is a separate health certificate. A fees charge should be raised by the PHA, for each CHED within the split consignment.

For consignments that are split before having been Customs cleared:

1. The operator responsible for the consignment must declare the BCP as the final destination on the CHED for the entire consignment.
2. The consignments should be split after Official Inspector checks are complete, and before Customs has cleared any part of the consignment.
3. Once the CHED for the consignment has been finalised at the BCP, the operator must request that the consignment be split. The operator must then submit a CHED for each split consignment through IPAFFS.
4. BCP officials will then need to complete Part 2 of the individual CHEDs. The quantities declared on the individual CHEDs must not exceed the quantity declared on the original CHED.
5. This process ensures that each individual 'split' consignment will have its own unique finalised CHED recorded on IPAFFS, covering each consignment from BCP to its final point of destination.
6. The operator responsible for each individual consignment must declare its unique CHED reference number with Customs authorities.

If a request for one CHED per container going to a single address is received, it should be refused – splitting of consignments is required when there is more than one intended end destination for what was originally imported as a single consignment.

Creating, receiving, and amending CHEDs - general advice

IPAFFS access - for importers or agents.
Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Access to the CHED Part 1 (creating notification) is only needed if the OI is creating a new notification on behalf of an import agent.

Whoever raises a Part 1 notification on IPAFFS will be recorded initially as the 'person responsible for the load'. This field can be overridden in Part 2 -

allowing BCP Official Inspectors to amend the CHED to include details of the actual importer or agent responsible for the consignment.
The person responsible for any consignment must make sure that all products are being imported to a BCP that is specifically listed on IPAFFS as designated to accept such consignments.

The IPAFFS entry should be an accurate record of the CHED. The Official Inspector should not amend or correct spelling mistakes and other minor errors but leave information as originally entered by the importer. However, the OI will need to ensure that technical information and details provided by the importer are correct, in line with Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) principles of certification.

If there are technical mistakes in Part 1, the OI should request an amendment from the importer to correct these. When an amendment has been requested, the CHED will not be visible in the IPAFFS dashboard until the importer resubmits it.

The Official Inspector will need to ensure that they have allocated sufficient time for proof-reading and quality assurance of the CHED details into their overall estimate of the time needed to clear each consignment.

To minimise the risk of transposition errors on key details, the OI must pay careful attention to the exporting country details, and the CN code used. Where 8 digit CN codes are available in IPAFFS, these should be used to describe the consignment.

IPAFFS - the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System

The Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) online interface replaced the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) when Great Britain exited the EU.

Reporting movement of POAO and HRFNAO using IPAFFS

IPAFFS must be used to record imports of animal products and HRFNAO, as part of the set of biosecurity controls for such imports. At the BCP, IPAFFS can be accessed and used by the appropriate Official Inspector (OI), i.e.:

- an Official Veterinarian (OV)
- an Official Fish Inspector (OFI)
- a Port Health Officer (PHO)

How to access IPAFFS

Agents and importers should register their organisation for IPAFFS through GOV.UK.
Initial BCP access to IPAFFS can be requested by emailing the APHA service desk at aphaservicedesk@apha.gov.uk
Additional users must be invited by the BCP's organisational administrator.

Using IPAFFS

All intended POAO imports to Great Britain must be notified to IPAFFS in advance of their arrival at the GB point of entry, by the importer or their agent completing Part 1 of a new CHED for each consignment.

For each import consignment, Official Inspectors at the BCP must then record:

- the outcome of the documentary check on the consignment, and of any identity and physical checks (when these are required)
- details of the laboratory tests, if required
- the decision

Once checks have started, OIs should 'Save and set in progress'. This will change the status of the notification from 'New' to 'In Progress'.

The OI should only save a notification as ‘In Progress’ once they are content that Part 1 of the CHED is accurate.

The importer (or their agent) will not be able to amend the notification once the status is ‘In Progress’, unless the OI activates the ‘Request amendment’ feature, to ask the importer to address and correct any technical errors on the CHED. When an amendment has been requested, the OI will then not be able to see the CHED in the IPAFFS dashboard until the importer corrects the error and resubmits the CHED.

User guidance for IPAFFS is available on the APHA website.

When an alert is created in IPAFFS

The BCP should receive an alert through IPAFFS when:

- a new notification is created
- a notification is changed to rejected status
- a notification has no follow up action after 7 days
- a notification requires a control at the exit BCP
- a notification is created when a control is required for monitored consignments to destination

Other information IPAFFS can provide

Rejected consignments.

- CHEDs for consignments that are rejected at BCPs and result in a Border Notification, or consignments which are inclusive of intensified official controls, are visible to all BCPs through the relevant dashboards in IPAFFS.

Equivalence and international agreements

The FTA European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement

Iceland

- Live animals and germinal products require BCP checks.
- Aquatic animals and ova, products of animal origin (POAO) and animal by-products (ABP) do not require BCP checks.

Greenland

- Goods other than fishery products require BCP checks.

Faroe Islands

- Goods other than fishery products and aquaculture require BCP checks.
- All other commodities should follow the phased import regime.

Other agreements

The UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was ratified in January 2019. The New Zealand equivalent certificate will continue to apply. The New Zealand agreement merges identity and physical checks on imports, and substantially reduces the number of checks.

The UK-Southern African Customs Union Member States and Mozambique (SACUM) agreement was made in November 2019.

USA, Canada and Japan agreements are being negotiated. USA and Canada equivalent certificates continue to apply.

Fresh fishery products ‘direct landed’ from a non-UK flagged vessel.

A **direct landing** means fish that is being landed for the first time - i.e., the catch has been constantly at sea up to the point of landing. The catch may have been prepared - for example gutted and headed.

Fresh fish can be directly landed from a non-UK flagged vessel in designated ports, and subject to Port Health Controls such as pre-landing notifications, North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) controls, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) documentation and Customs declarations.

In addition to port health controls, the vessel and the catch will be subject to the same local authority checks as for any UK flagged vessel landing a catch.

These checks include regular hygiene checks on storage of the catch on board, the handling and landing of the catch. Checks are undertaken in line with the Food Law Code of Practice.

Fresh fish landed directly will not need a GB health certificate:

- for landing
- to enter the UK market via a Border Control Post that is approved to handle fishery products for human consumption

There are specific rules for tuna when it is landed and not presented to a BCP and is subject to a location that BCP staff will be able to travel to and make the required checks. Refer to the FSA guidance.

Where fresh fish is directly landed and presented to a BCP, the fishery products should be checked using the rules laid down in the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625 and Regulation (EC) 853/2004, for placing fishery products onto the UK market.

For fresh or prepared fish, specific provisions exist for primary production processes such as heading, de-finning and gutting, which are defined as ‘primary processing’ and ‘preparation’ of fish at sea, and as such are not processes that require food-approved status of the vessel.

Processed fishery products direct landed from a non-UK flagged vessel.

Frozen or otherwise secondary processed fishery products from freezer, factory or reefer vessels, which are direct landed from a non-UK vessel, should be checked using the rules laid down in the the Official Controls Regulation 2017/625 and Regulation (EC) 853/2004 for placing fishery products onto the UK market for human consumption:

- consignments should be presented to the BCP with a Captain's Certificate
- the vessel should be listed as an approved food establishment by the flag state (or in rare cases by a member state of the EU which carried out the inspection and approval)
- the vessel should be listed as 'EU premises approved for export to the UK'.

Anti-fraud measures

Fishery certificates from some countries are sent by email. A list of certificates issued by these countries is emailed to the BCP by APHA.

If a certificate received by email is not listed, follow the instructions in the email.

Records of Border Control Post activities

There is a legal requirement to keep written evidence of the official controls performed at the BCP, in line with Article 13 of the Official Controls Regulations (OCR) 2017/625.

The following information should be available at all times for all BCP staff:

- imports legislation
- list of approved establishments
- list of free zones and free warehouses and ship suppliers
- National Residue Plan
- up to date contact details for:
    - UK BCPs
    - local Border Force office
    - APHA local and CIT offices
    - Animal by-product facilities / waste facilities
    - official laboratories
- Memorandum of Understanding and Standard Operating Procedures for the BCP
- official correspondence

Records to be kept for at least three years

BCPs must keep the following records for at least 3 years:

- import pre-notifications
- copies of physical Common Health Entry Documents (CHEDs), as set out in Article 42 Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/1715 (to note: electronic documentation is automatically retained on IPAFFS for the required statutory periods)
- original health certificates, and other documents accompanying consignments referred to in Article 50(1) 2017/625 (or electronic equivalents) (see Articles 5(3) and 5(4) Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2130)
- identification of which Inspection Centre is used for each check
- records of rejected consignments, and follow up actions including disposal of consignments where applicable
- evidence of enforcement actions
- manifest checks
- illegal consignments referred to Border Force

- communications with Customs and Border Force
- monitoring consignments and follow up actions
- transits and follow up actions
- transhipments and follow up actions
- all communications, evidence, decisions and follow ups relating to re-entry of consignments
- Food Alerts and follow up actions
- official appointment of staff
- APHA audit evaluation

Records to be kept for one year

BCPs must keep the following records for at least one year from the date of an APHA audit visit:

- documented random procedure for the selection of consignments for physical checks
- sampling plan and records, submission forms and results
- verification checks, issues, and actions log
- maintenance plan
- calibration records for thermometers
- pest control programme at the BCP
- cleaning and disinfection records
- training records of all BCP staff
- declarations of conflict of interest

Legislation for record keeping

In line with Article 13 of 2017/625, any competent authorities to whom official border control tasks have been delegated must draw up Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for every official control they perform. These SOPs may be on paper or in electronic form, and must include:

- a description of the purpose of the official controls
- the control methods applied
- the outcome of the official controls
- where appropriate, action that the competent authorities require the operator concerned to take as a result of their official controls

Article 14(e): official control methods and techniques include as appropriate (among other procedures) an examination of documents, traceability records

and other records which may be relevant to the assessment of compliance with the rules referred to in Article 1(2), including, where appropriate, documents accompanying food, feed and any substance or material entering or leaving an establishment.

Article 56(3)(b)(i): The Common Health Entry Document (CHED) shall be used by competent authorities of a border control post to record the outcome of the official controls performed and any decisions taken on that basis, including the decision to reject a consignment. Article 56(3)(b)(ii) provides that the CHED is also used to communicate the information referred to in (i) through the appropriate computerised information management system.

Article 5(2) of Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2130 requires the competent authorities to record the results of laboratory analyses, tests or diagnoses on the CHED, as soon as they are available, for consignments which have been tested and placed on the market before those test results were available.

Special Cases - public health requirements

Importing furred (unskinned) wild game

Health checks and residue analyses on imported unskinned wild game are carried out at the establishment of destination.

Such consignments will only be permitted to leave the BCP with a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) if they are in sealed, leak-proof containers.

The results of any further checks carried out at destination should be sent to the Official Inspector at the import BCP.

If the results show a serious infringement, or indicate that the maximum level of residues has been exceeded, the Official Inspector should refer to the procedures for serious or repeated infringements.

Fishmeal and fish feed testing requirements at BCPs

Imported fishmeal and fish feed must be analysed by microscopy before it can be released, and must meet the import conditions in the Animal By-products Regulations 142/2011. This includes testing for salmonella, and microscopy testing for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE).

The consignment is held at the BCP while waiting for the results of the sampling process.

Samples for microscopy testing must be representative of the consignment, and should weigh at least 500g.

Containerised consignments should be treated as ‘packaged’ and sampled under the protocol applicable for bagged consignments.

The tables below are based on retained (i.e., still applied in GB) Commission Regulation 152/2009 concerning methods of sampling for the official control of feeding stuffs:

Packaged consignments (bags and/or lined shipping containers)		
Number of packages	**Increments**	**Aggregates for final samples**
1-4	1 from each	1
5-16	4	1
17-200	Square root of no. of packages, up to a maximum of 15	2
201-800	Square root of no. of packages, up to a maximum of 29	3
More than 800	Square root of no. of packages, up to a maximum of 40	4

The same protocol may be used for salmonella sampling of processed animal protein, but for packages up to 15 the increments should be 5 and the sample sent should weigh at least 500g

Loose bulk consignments		
Tonnage	**Increments**	**Aggregates for final samples**
0 - 2.5	7	2
>2.5 -10	square root of 20 times no. of tonnes, up to a max. of 15	2
>10 - 40	square root of 20 times no. of tonnes, up to a max. of 29	3
>40	square root of 20 times no. of tonnes, up to a max. of 40	4

The sample submission form must be used when submitting fishmeal for TSE microscopy testing.

Postal samples for TSE sampling should be sent to:

APHA Weybridge
Scientific Services Unit – Feed Testing
Woodham Lane
New Haw
Addlestone
Surrey
KT15 3NB

Email: lab.services@apha.gov.uk

Official Inspectors should record on IPAFFS that samples have been taken and upload the results onto IPAFFS when they become available.

The Port Health Authority should recover the charges for TSE microscopy testing and other tests from the importer, either as part of the overall cost of biosecurity checks, or as an additional import operational charge.

If the consignment is destined for an intermediate store or approved commercial storage, its onward movement to the feed mill will be subject to official controls, as set out in the national feed audit programme.

Salmonella samples should be sent to a United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredited laboratory.

The laboratory used must have ISO 17025 for the specific test required. www.gov.uk/guidance/laboratory-testing-requirements-for-animal-by-products-abps

Reprocessing fishmeal that tests positive for salmonella

This consignment would fall into actions under Article 66(3)(c) of the OCR in that it can go inland for the necessary processing to ensure that it complies with the Salmonella requirements

To move qualifying consignments as described above, the Official Inspector must:

- treat the consignment under Regulation 20 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011 (with no rejection notice)

- sample, clear the goods and collect fees in line with the Animal Feed Regulations
- enter sample results in the register of non-conforming consignments and IPAFFS
- agree the destination of the consignment with the enforcement authority for animal feed for the reprocessing establishment

The feed business operator must have the consignment sampled after reprocessing so they can check that the treatment was successful.

Treatment of the material prior to use could include the decontamination by chemical treatment.

For other PAP, consult APHA CIT.

Fishery certificates – anti fraud measures

Fishery certificates from some countries are sent by email. A list of certificates issued by these countries are emailed to the BCP by APHA.

If the certificate is not listed, follow the instructions in the email.

Special Cases - specific certification

Importing fresh meat from New Zealand via Singapore

New Zealand authorities have asked for a faster way to transport meat to Great Britain.

They foresee sending the meat from NZ to Singapore by air where it will be stored in an approved establishment in the Customs area of the airport. It will then be reloaded and transited across Singapore to the seaport where it will be loaded and shipped to GB.

Consignments will be accompanied from NZ to Singapore by the certificate provided in the Equivalence Agreement.

On arrival in Singapore, documentary and identity checks will be carried out. When leaving the approved establishment in Singapore the reefer container will be sealed by the relevant authorities.

When the consignment leaves Singapore a further transit certificate (NZ-TRANSIT-SG) will be issued by the competent authority (CA) in Singapore.

On arrival in GB, each consignment will be accompanied by two certificates – one issued by the NZ CA, and the other issued by the Singapore CA.

The consignment can be treated as if it were coming from NZ, and the level of checks that are carried out should reflect those set out in the NZ Agreement.

It is not envisaged that consignments will be amalgamated or consolidated in Singapore.

Therefore, for each such consignment presented at the BCP, the meat referred to in the transit certificate will cover the same product or consignment as that covered by the certificate issued in NZ.

The Common Health Entry Document (CHED) should be completed as follows:

- country of origin – NZ
- country from where consigned – Singapore

- veterinary documents – certificate and details from Singapore

The consignment should arrive with both certificates from NZ and Singapore.

In order to facilitate this trade, Singapore has been added to the list of countries in Part I of Annex II of Regulation (EU) No 206/2010 and a transit certificate has been added to GOV.UK.

The Official Inspector must check whether the establishment in Singapore is approved for this type of trade.

If, under these new arrangements, fresh meat is received from NZ that has been stored in a non-approved establishment in Singapore, the inspector must hold the consignment at the BCP, and contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency Centre for International Trade (APHA CIT) for further advice.

Rules on certification for imports of bovine embryos

The rules on certification for imports of bovine embryos are set out in Article 10 (1) of Directive 89/556/EEC, which states that importation of embryos shall be authorised only on submission of a relevant health certificate, published by the Secretary of State and amended from time to time, drawn up and signed by an official veterinarian of the country of collection.

The certificate must:

- be drawn up in English (with additional language(s) optional)
- be made out to a single consignee

The original certificate must accompany the embryos.

Official inspectors should not refuse consignments from countries where they are:

- transported in a single tank or container
- covered by a single health certificate which has more than one team's details for more than one batch

Composite products and compound products

Composite products

Composite products are defined in Article 2(a) of Retained EU Decision 2007/275 as ‘a foodstuff intended for human consumption that contains both processed products of animal origin (POAO) and products of plant origin, and includes those where the processing of the primary product is an integral part of the production of the final product’.

Further information can be found in the APHA import information note on composite products.

Compound products

Compound products are products that contain more than one processed or unprocessed POAO. They might also contain plant material.

Products with POAO that cannot be separated

Compound products with POAO that cannot be separated are made up mostly of one POAO, with small quantities of other POAO added to form an integral part of the final product. For example:

- fish balls with a small amount of egg white used as a thickener
- meat marinated in yoghurt, milk, oil and spices

Requirements for products with POAO that cannot be separated

The final product must comply with animal and public health guarantees for the major POAO, and all the POAO must:

- come from a listed country
- have an approved residue plan

The products must be accompanied by an export health certificate (EHC) for the major POAO

There are different requirements for the added POAO, depending on whether the final product is cooked or raw, and the type of added POAO. For instance, if a product has a high amount of dairy and small amounts of meat, a certificate would be expected for both the meat and the dairy.

Requirements for added POAO in cooked final products

Cooked final products with added POAO are usually fishery or meat products with a small amount of dairy or egg content, for example:

- prawns fried in garlic butter
- chicken with some milk or egg powders on the coatings, such as chicken nuggets
- surimi (processed fish moulded to resemble shellfish products, eg in sushi) with egg white used as a binder

Dairy ingredients in cooked products must:

- come from a listed country
- have received relevant heat treatments
- have an approved residue plan

Egg ingredients must:

- come from a listed country
- have an approved residue plan

Requirements for added POAO in raw final products

Raw final products with added POAO are usually fishery or meat products with a small amount of dairy or egg content, for example:

- meat marinated in yoghurt, milk, oil and spices
- fish in batter coating containing milk powder
- prawns with a batter coating containing egg

Dairy and egg ingredients in raw products must:

- come from a listed country
- have received relevant treatments
- have an approved residue plan

The product may need an authorisation from APHA for entry to GB.

Products with POAO that are distinct components

Compound products with POAO that can be separated, are products that contain a mixture of POAO as distinct components - for example:

- steak packaged with a piece of butter
- whole fish with a meat stuffing
- sushi topped with egg products

Requirements for distinct POAO

The final product must:

- come from a listed country
- come from an approved establishment
- have an approved residue plan for each POAO
- be accompanied by the relevant model health certificate for each POAO in the assembled product

The product may need an authorisation from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for entry into Great Britain.

Transhipment of consignments via Great Britain

Transhipped consignments are those consignments entering Great Britain (GB) by sea or air transport from another country, moved from a vessel or aircraft, and transported under Customs supervision to another vessel or aircraft in the same port or airport, in preparation for onward transport to another country.

Consignments that arrive at a GB Border Control Post and are moved across GB territory before leaving the country are **transit consignments**.

Checks and transhipment periods for transhipped consignments

Rules of BCP checks and time constraints on consignments from countries transhipping via GB to another country are set out in EU retained Delegated Regulation 2019/2124.

Consignments that are subject to animal health requirements

For goods subject to both animal health requirements, and rules to prevent and minimise risks to human and animal health arising from animal by products and derived products (see retained EU Regulation 2019/2124 article 13(1)(a)), checks must be performed on original copies of the official certificates or documents which accompany the consignment – including electronic documentation on IPAFFS.

The BCP at which transhipped consignments enter GB must perform documentary checks on consignments of these goods when the transhipment period exceeds:

- three days - at an airport
- 30 days - at a seaport

For consignments intended for transhipment within these periods, the operator responsible for the consignments must provide pre-notification to the BCP of transhipment detailing:

- the estimated time of arrival and departure of the consignment
- identification of the means of transport
- destination of the consignments
- information necessary for the identification and location of the consignments in the airport or port

Examples of commodities subject to animal health requirements, and the rules for preventing and minimising risks to human and animal health arising from animal by products and derived products, include:

- all meats and meat products
- milk and milk products
- eggs and egg products
- animal by-products and derived products
- casings
- rendered fats and greaves
- composite products with meat, milk and egg
- hatching eggs
- semen and embryos
- hay and straw
- fish and fishery products with animal health requirements

Procedures should be in place at the BCP to ensure that the consignment leaves GB within the transhipment periods noted above – three days at airports, or 30 days at seaports.

The official certificates or documents on which documentary checks are performed must be returned to the operator responsible for the consignment, to allow the official certificates or documents to accompany the consignment for onward travel.

Where the consignment does not comply with the rules referred to in Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, the competent authorities of the BCP must order the operator either to destroy the consignment or to ensure that it leaves GB territory without delay.

Where the BCP of transhipment suspects non-compliance, full documentary, identity and physical checks must be performed on the consignment.

Consignments not subject to animal health requirements

For consignments of POAO, germinal products, animal by products, derived products, hay and straw, and composite products not subject to animal health requirements (set out in Article 13(1)(b) of retained EU Regulation 2019/2124), where the transhipment period at the airport or seaport exceeds 90 days, the consignment must be subject to documentary checks.

Examples of commodities not subject to animal health requirements are:

- fish and fishery products with no animal health requirements
- honey
- gelatine and collagen
- frog legs and snails
- insects
- highly refined products
- reptile meat
- other composite products (under veterinary checks)

Deferring checks to a second entry point (BCP) for consignments being imported into GB

As a general rule, documentary and identity checks (and physical checks when required), should be carried out at the BCP of entry.

Under exceptional circumstances, the Official Inspector at the BCP of entry may defer the documentary and identity checks to a second BCP within GB, as long as the consignment is transhipped directly to the second BCP.

For example, when there is no time to perform documentary and identity checks at the BCP of arrival due to flight connection being less than 4 hours, the second BCP will perform those checks. The operator has the obligation to notify both BCPs of the arrival of the consignment, and to agree with the Official Inspector where the checks need to be carried out.

What must be done if checks are carried out at a second BCP

The person responsible for the consignment must notify the Official Inspector at the BCP of final destination of the following details:

- the estimated time of arrival
- the BCP at which the consignment will be checked
- the identification and location of the consignment
- the estimated time of departure from the BCP of entry

If the Official Inspector at the BCP of entry has reason to believe that the consignment may pose an animal or public health risk, checks will be carried out as the Official Inspector deems necessary.

Storage

During the transhipment period, operators must ensure that consignments are only stored in either:

- sealed containers in the customs or free zone area of the same port or airport
- commercial storage facilities under the control of the same BCP

The consignments must be:

- stored under hygienic conditions
- be properly identified by barcodes or other electronic means, or labelling

Where the goods may pose a risk to human, animal and plant health, they must be kept in a separate lockable room or area fenced off from all other goods stored in the facility.

Transit of consignments across Great Britain

Transit consignments are consignments entering Great Britain by sea, air, rail or road transport from a third country, which enter at one location and are moved across GB territory, before leaving from a different location to travel to a different third country.

Further information on transits can be found in Delegated Regulation 2019/2124, as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) (No. 2) Regulations 2020. Information on U.K. Customs requirements for transited goods can be found here.

Goods sent from one country to another via GB (excluding EU-GB-EU movements)

Unless import duty has been paid on these goods, the person responsible for the consignment must submit a transit declaration to Customs on the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS).

If the goods arrive from an EU or Common Transit Convention (CTC) country by Roll-on/Roll-off (RoRo) ferry, the NCTS declaration will have been made before the transportation vehicle drives onto the ferry. If the goods arrive from any other country, the NCTS declaration will be made upon arrival.

Once the consignment has been released by the Port Health Authority (PHA), Customs will create a T1 document and provide it to the person responsible for the consignment. To reduce pressure on Customs offices, authorised consignors can be approved to create the T1 document themselves.

Goods can enter GB via a Border Control Post designated for the commodities in question, move across GB, and exit GB at a BCP - as long as the total transit time is 15 days or fewer.

Goods in transit to other countries must comply with the GB animal health requirements and must come from a country that is approved to import that category of goods to GB. They do not have to comply with the public health requirements (such as approved establishment of origin, or residues plan) and they do not need a public health certificate.

The BCP of entry can only authorise the transit of consignments of products of animal origin, germinal products, animal by-products, derived products, hay and straw and composite products. if they comply with the following conditions:

- Where required, animal health requirements are met - the consignment must be accompanied by a transit health certificate in accordance with Regulations 2019/2124 and 2019/2128
- The goods have been subject to documentary and identity checks at the BCP. Physical checks can also be carried out in case of suspicion of non-compliance.
- The consignments can only leave the BCP accompanied by a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) and the necessary certificates or other documents.
- The goods must be transported in sealed vehicles or containers. The seal can be the original seal from the country of origin. The seal can be either commercial or official, excepting where required in official certification. All seal numbers need to included in the official documentation where appropriate the competent authority needs to break the original seal, the consignment will need to be re-sealed, which should be done by the PHA. The new seal number needs to be added to the CHED. In some cases, Official Inspectors will need to issue a non-manipulation certificate that will accompany the CHED as required by the competent authority of the country of destination.

The consignment must be directly transported under customs supervision, without the goods being unloaded or split, within a **maximum period of 15 days** from the BCP to one of the following destinations:

- to a BCP of exit - to leave the GB territory
- to an approved warehouse
- to a NATO military base, including US bases
- to a vessel leaving GB, where the consignment is intended for ship supplying purposes

Transit certificates

Germinal products, hay and straw do not need a transit health certificate.

If a transit health certificate is needed for animal products moving across GB, the certification is usually laid down in the legislation relevant to that product.

Consignments destined to NATO military bases, including US bases, or intended for ship supply must be accompanied by their specific model health certificate published on GOV.UK in accordance with the EU retained Regulation 2019/2128.

Communication between BCPs, and actions to verify that goods are leaving the country

Controls on transiting goods are intended to ensure that goods received at the entry BCP have exited the country from the scheduled exit BCP, within the time permitted, and with all necessary checks completed and documented.

Once the CHED is submitted for transiting goods, IPAFFS will generate an automatic notification which will be sent to the BCP of exit.

The competent authority at the BCP of entry can also email the competent authority at the BCP of exit to inform them that the consignment is on its way.

The competent authority at the BCP of exit must verify that the seals fixed in the vehicles or containers are still intact and the consignment leaves GB.

The BCP of exit will inform the BCP of entry when the goods leave GB territory, by completing and validating the CHED on IPAFFS, or by email if IPAFFS is unavailable. If this does not happen, the competent authority at the BCP of entry should begin an investigation.

If the competent authorities of the BCP of entry have not received confirmation of the arrival of consignments at the BCP of exit or any other destination specified in the CHED within 15 days from the date that transit was authorised, then:

- the competent authority at the BCP of entry must verify with the competent authorities at the place of exit whether or not the consignment has arrived
- if the consignment has not arrived at the BCP of exit and cannot be tracked the Official Inspector must inform Customs and the APHA CIT

Further investigation to determine the actual location of the consignment will be carried out in cooperation with Customs authorities and other authorities, to prevent entry to GB of goods not intended, or legally cleared, to enter.

Actions at the BCP of exit

Goods leaving GB territory to be transported to another country must be presented for official controls to the competent authorities of the BCP indicated in the CHED, at a location specified by the competent authorities. The following types of goods in transit leaving GB territory should be presented for official controls at the BCP of exit:

- products of animal origin (POAO)
- germinal products
- animal by-products (ABP)
- derived products
- hay and straw
- composite products

The PHA at the BCP of exit must perform identity checks to ensure the consignment is the same one referred to in the CHED or accompanying official certificate. The T1 document must be presented to Border Force at the office of transit.

The checks must verify that the seals on vehicles or transport containers are still intact and match the numbers on the CHED or health certificate.

The PHA must complete Part 3 of the CHED, and Part 3 of the official certificate, if the consignment is being dispatched to a NATO military base, including US bases, or for a vessel leaving GB.

The T1 document must be presented to Border Force at the office of transit.

Further information about consignments destined for Customs approved warehouses and ship supplies, and conditions for transportation and storage in those approved warehouses, can be found in the BCP Manual guidance on imports going to Customs warehouses, ships' stores and cross-border transport or cruise ships.

Transit declarations

When the consignment arrives at the port of loading, the person responsible for the consignment must present the T1 document to Border Force officials at the office of destination.
If the goods are loaded onto a ship as stores, the person must end the transit declaration on the NCTS.

Goods sent from one EU country to another country via GB

Unless import duty has been paid on these goods, the person responsible for the consignment must submit a transit declaration to Customs on the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS).

If the goods arrive from an EU or Common Transit Convention (CTC) country by Roll-on/Roll-off (RoRo) ferry, the NCTS declaration will have been made before the transportation vehicle drives onto the ferry. If the goods arrive from any other country, the NCTS declaration will be made upon arrival.

Once the consignment has been released by the Port Health Authority (PHA), Customs will create a T1 document and provide it to the person responsible for the consignment. To reduce pressure on Customs offices, authorised consignors can be approved to create the T1 document themselves.

Goods can enter GB via a Border Control Post designated for the commodities in question, move across GB, and exit GB at a BCP - if the total transit time is 15 days or fewer.

Goods in transit to other countries must comply with the GB animal health requirements and must come from a country that is approved to import that category of goods to GB. They do not have to comply with the public health requirements (such as approved establishment of origin, or residues plan) and they do not need a public health certificate.

The BCP of entry and exit can only authorise the transit of consignments of products of animal origin, germinal products, animal by-products, derived products, hay and straw and composite products, if they comply with the following conditions:

- Animal health requirements are met – high and medium risk consignments must be accompanied by a transit health certificate in accordance with Regulations 2019/2124 and 2019/2128 and low risk consignments must be accompanied by commercial documents.
- High and medium risk goods have been subject to 100% documentary checks on entry. High risk goods have been subject to 100% identity

(seal) checks on entry and exit. Medium risk goods have been subject to 1-30% identity (seal) checks on entry or exit (in line with import inspection rates). Physical checks can be carried out in case of suspicion of non-compliance.

- Low risk goods will not be subject to routine checks on entry or exit however they may be subject to non-routine/intelligence led checks.
- All consignments must be pre-notified in IPAFFS by completing a Common Health Entry Document (CHED) and providing the necessary certificates or other documents.
- High and medium risk goods must be sealed for sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) purposes (except transiting live animals) and the seal number entered onto the official documentation. Excepting where required in the official certification, this can be either a commerical seal or an official seal. Where official seals of medium and high-risk goods are applied, they must be placed under the supervision of the competent authority issuing the health certificate and the number needs to match the transit certificate. If the competent authority needs to break the original seal, the consignment will need to be re-sealed, which should be done by the PHA. The new seal number needs to be added to the CHED. In some cases, Official Inspectors will need to issue a non-manipulation certificate that will accompany the CHED as required by the competent authority of the country of destination.
- The operator responsible for the consignment sends an exit confirmation email to the PHA at the BCP of exit confirming exit from GB (including bill of lading/airway bill per current requirements).

The consignment must be directly transported under customs supervision, without the goods being unloaded or split, within a **maximum period of 15 days** from the BCP to one of the following destinations:

- to a BCP of exit - to leave the GB territory
- to an approved warehouse
- to a NATO military base, including US bases
- to a vessel leaving GB, where the consignment is intended for ship supplying purposes.

The T1 document must be presented to Border Force at the office of transit.

Transit certificates

Germinal products, hay and straw do not need a transit health certificate.

If a transit health certificate is needed for animal products moving across GB, the certification is usually laid down in the legislation relevant to that product. Consignments destined to NATO military bases, including US bases, or intended for ship supply must be accompanied by their specific model health certificate published on GOV.UK in accordance with the EU retained Regulation 2019/2128.

Actions for the BCP of entry

For high and medium risk transiting goods, the BCP of entry will undertake 100% documentary checks.

For high-risk transiting goods, the BCP of entry will undertake 100% identity (seal) checks and complete Part 2 of the CHED. Once Part 2 of the CHED is complete, IPAFFS will generate an automatic notification which will be sent to the BCP of exit. The BCP of entry can also email the BCP of exit to inform them that the consignment is on its way.

For medium risk transiting goods, 1-30% will be selected for identity (seal) checks at the BCP of entry **or** exit. If the goods are selected for checks at the BCP of entry, the BCP will undertake the identity (seal) check and complete Part 2 of the CHED.

For low risk transiting goods, no routine checks are required by the BCP of entry or exit however they may undertake non-routine/intelligence led checks. Refer to low risk surveillance check guidance for more information.

If goods selected for checks do not arrive at the BCP, the BCP of entry will need to undertake an investigation.

Actions for the BCP of exit

For high-risk transiting goods, the BCP of exit will undertake 100% identity (seal) checks to verify that the seals fixed on the vehicles or containers are still intact, complete Part 3 of the CHED and the consignment leaves GB.

For medium risk transiting goods, 1-30% will be selected for identity (seal) checks at the BCP of entry **or** exit. If the goods are selected for checks at the BCP of exit, the BCP will undertake the identity (seal) check and complete Part 3 of the CHED and Part 3 of the official certificate, if the consignment is being dispatched to a NATO military base, including US bases, or for a vessel leaving GB. The T1 document must be presented to Border Force at the office of transit.

The checks must verify that the seals on vehicles or transport containers are still intact and match the numbers on the CHED or health certificate.

For goods that have been checked at the BCP of entry and goods that are not selected for checks, the BCP of exit will still need to complete Part 3 of the CHED to finalise these in IPAFFS. By completing Part 3 of the CHED in IPAFFS the BCP of entry and exit is notified that the goods have left GB territory.

If the competent authorities of the BCP of entry have not received confirmation of the arrival of consignments at the BCP of exit or any other destination specified in the CHED within 15 days from the date that transit was authorised, then:

- the competent authority at the BCP of entry must verify with the competent authorities at the place of exit whether or not the consignment has arrived
- if the consignment has not arrived at the BCP of exit and cannot be tracked the Official Inspector must inform Customs and the APHA CIT.

Further investigation to determine the actual location of the consignment will be carried out in cooperation with Customs authorities and other authorities, to prevent entry to GB of goods not intended, or legally cleared, to enter.

Further information about consignments destined for Customs approved warehouses and ship supplies, and conditions for transportation and storage in those approved warehouses, can be found in the BCP Manual guidance on

imports going to Customs warehouses, ships' stores and cross-border transport or cruise ships.

Transit declarations

When the consignment arrives at the port of loading, the person responsible for the consignment must present the T1 document to Border Force officials at the office of destination.
If the goods are loaded onto a ship as stores, the person must end the transit declaration on the NCTS.

Transits of consignments destined for NATO military bases, including US bases

Consignments that are moved from a warehouse to a NATO military base, including US bases, must comply with the following conditions:

- they must move from a warehouse located in GB to a NATO military base (including US bases) located in the territory of GB, or in any of the territories of the Crown Dependencies, or in another country
- the official CHED may be issued in hard copy, or digitally on IPAFFS

Where the content of consignments is formed at a warehouse and composed of products of different origins or product categories, one single official certificate may be issued to accompany such consignments.

'Article 3 requirements for official paper signed certificates'

Official certificates that are not submitted in IMSOC must meet the following requirements:

- the signature of the certifying officer, and an official stamp – both in a different colour ink to that of the printing.
- Where the official certificate contains statements, statements which are not relevant must be crossed out, initiated and stamped by the certifying officer, or completely removed from the certificate.
- The official certificate must consist of either:
    - a single sheet of paper
    - several sheets of paper where all sheets are indivisible and constitute an integral whole
    - a sequence of pages numbered so as to indicate that it is a particular page in a finite sequence

- Where the official certificate consists of a sequence of pages, each page must indicate the unique code as referred to in Article 89(1)(a) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and bear the signature of the certifying officer and the official stamp.
- The official certificate must be issued before the consignments to which it relates leave the control of the competent authorities at the border control post or at the warehouse.
- The OCR allows for the original paper certificate or an 'electronic equivalent' to be provided.
- A certificate must be ‘signed by the certifying officer’, which means for an ‘e-signed PDF’ to be considered as an 'electronic equivalent' it will need to be compatible with the requirements in legislation.
-
- The requirements are contained in **Regulation 2019/1715**; broadly, that a certificate requires:
- -A qualified electronic signature
- -A qualified electronic seal
- -A qualified electronic time stamp
-
- These terms are defined in **Regulation 910/2014**:
-
- **A qualified electronic signature** means:
- (a) it is uniquely linked to the signatory.
- (b) it can identify the signatory.
- (c) it is created using electronic signature creation data that the signatory can, with a high level of confidence, use under his sole control; and
- (d) it is linked to the data signed therewith in such a way that any subsequent change in the data is detectable.
-
- **A qualified electronic seal** means:
- (a) it is uniquely linked to the creator of the seal.
- (b) it can identify the creator of the seal.
- (c) it is created using electronic seal creation data that the creator of the seal can, with a high level of confidence under its control, use for electronic seal creation; and
- (d) it is linked to the data to which it relates in such a way that any subsequent change in the data is detectable.
-
- **A qualified electronic time stamp** means:
- (a) it binds the date and time to data in such a manner as to reasonably preclude the possibility of the data being changed undetectably.
- (b) it is based on an accurate time source linked to Coordinated Universal Time; and

- (c) it is signed using an advanced electronic signature or sealed with an advanced electronic seal of the qualified trust service provider, or by some equivalent method.

Conditions for transportation of goods from warehouses to NATO military bases, including US bases and vessels leaving GB

The operator responsible for the consignment must transport the goods referred to in Regulation (EU) 2019/2124 Article 23(1) from the approved warehouses to one of the destinations referred to in points (a)(i),(c) and (d) of Article 24 - provided that the following requirements are fulfilled:

- The operator responsible for the warehouse declares the movement of the goods to the competent authorities by completing Part I of the CHED
- The competent authority authorises the movement of the goods and issues (to the operator responsible for the consignment) a completed official certificate for the delivery of the consignment containing goods derived from more than one consignment of origin or product categories
- The operator responsible for the consignment ensures that an official certificate as published by the Secretary of State accompanies the consignment to its place of destination
- The operator responsible for the consignment transports the goods under customs supervision
- The operator responsible for the consignment transports the goods from the warehouses in vehicles or transport containers which were sealed under the supervision of the competent authorities.

Import of animal by-products

[*17 December 2023*] – this section is currently under substantive revision. The Manual will be updated shortly with fully updated new guidance content on ABP imports.

If you have an urgent query relating to checks and controls on ABP consignments, for imports currently at or scheduled to arrive shortly at your BCP, please contact the BCPManual@defra.gov.uk inbox, or imports@apha.gov.uk - or call APHA CIT on 03000 200 301.

Rejected consignments

Rejected consignments can be handled in the following ways:

- re-dispatched
- destroyed
- processed and able to be reclassified (under the Animal By-Products regulations), providing there is no health risk. Reclassified consignments will only be permitted if and when APHA CIT has agreed the reclassification.

The importer (or their agent) must meet all costs arising from a rejected consignment.

When a consignment fails to clear the BCP checks required, and thus does not meet the requirements for entry into GB, if the consignment poses no risk to public or animal health, TARP Regulations 2011 allow for:

- re-dispatching to a destination outside GB
- subjecting the consignment to appropriate treatment
- destruction, in accordance with retained Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009, if redispatch is not possible, or the importer chooses to have the consignment destroyed

Common Health Entry Documents (CHEDs) should indicate only one further action for rejected consignments. The Official Inspector must leave box II.16 ('Not acceptable') blank until a decision has been made about the final outcome for the consignment.

Partial rejection

The competent authority at the BCP may, as an exception, authorise action to be taken towards part of a consignment, provided that the partial destruction, redispatch, special treatment, or other measure:

- is to ensure compliance with the import rules
- does not pose a risk to human, animal or plant health or to animal welfare, or to the environment in the case of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and plant protection products
- does not disrupt official control operations at the BCP

Re-dispatching rejected consignments

Rejected consignments should be re-dispatched from the same BCP, within 60 days of the importer being informed of the decision.

The competent authority will invalidate all certification and documentation for that consignment. The certification should be marked ‘unacceptable for entry to GB’ on all pages, to ensure the certification cannot be re-presented after the certificate is returned to the importer/agent. The ‘unacceptable’ stamp should be provided by the local authority or PHA.

The destination for the rejected consignment should be agreed with the person responsible for the consignment, in line with the requirements in Article 72 of the Official Controls Regulation (OCR).

The person responsible for the load should advise the destination authorities of the reason for rejection, and circumstances preventing the consignment being placed on the GB market.

If the consignment is being re-dispatched to a country other than the country of origin, the competent authority of destination should notify the BCP of its preparedness to accept the consignment.

Destroying rejected consignments

Consignments must be destroyed without delay at a facility approved under the relevant ABP regulation, such as an incinerator or rendering plant.

If rendered, the residual material must then be destroyed - or, if there is no risk to public or animal health, used for some other purpose, in accordance with the regulations governing rendered animal waste. Even if repurposed, the product will remain subject to the ABP regulations

If the product cannot be handled at an approved rendering plant, another form of destruction will be ordered by the Official Inspector at the BCP.

Rejected consignments should be treated in accordance with the Animal By-Products legislation and should be accompanied by a commercial document that includes the following information:

- date on which the material was taken from the BCP

- description of the material
- quantity of the material
- place of origin of the material
- name and address of the carrier
- name and address of the receiver and, if applicable, its approval number

Costs for rejected consignments

The BCP's Port Health Authority (PHA) or Local Authority should charge all port health costs for rejected consignments to the importer, in line with TARP Regulations. These costs include:

- storage
- transport
- redispatch
- reprocessing
- disposal

If a commercial store is used for the consignment ahead of re-export or destruction, the importer should pay the store directly.

Treatment of a consignment

A consignment that has failed import biosecurity checks could be subject to special treatment, in accordance with Article 71(1) and (2) of retained EU Regulation 2017/625, or to any other measure necessary to ensure compliance with the rules referred to in Article 1(2). Where appropriate, the consignment may be allocated for purposes other than those for which it was originally intended

If the final destination of the consignment is for human consumption, the treatment must be subject to risk assessment. These consignments are dealt with on a case-by-case basis by APHA CIT or the FSA/FSS and must have agreement before being permitted for import.

Steps for rejecting a consignment

Consignments may be rejected if:

- they are non-compliant with official control regulations
- they are presented at a BCP that is not designated to handle that commodity
- there is a serious risk to animal or public health in accepting the consignment

To note: ‘non-conforming’ goods – those which do not comply with public health regulations, but which are to be delivered to vessels leaving GB and intended for ship supply or consumption by the crew and passengers, or to NATO or a United States’ military base, can be treated as transits or transhipments and be moved through GB to their point of destination.

The Official Inspector may also serve a notice to order the immediate destruction of a consignment, if they consider that it presents a risk to animal or public health.

When it has been decided that the consignment should be rejected:

- The importer must be notified of the Official Inspector’s decision and any rights of appeal.
- The Official Inspector should consult the person responsible for the consignment (i.e., importer or agent).
- The person responsible should be notified:
    - of the reason for rejecting the consignment
    - of the action required by the notice
    - that a time limit of 60 days is set for the action to be taken

The notification should be given in writing and must include details of the reason for rejection and the right of appeal against the notice, including the appeal procedure (such as magistrate’s court or judicial review, and time limits applicable to appeal).

If the importer or agent chooses to re-export the consignment, the BCP is not responsible for making arrangements for the re-export. However, the BCP must take reasonable steps to ensure the security of the consignment until suitable arrangements have been made.

The arrangements for storing the consignment pending re-export or destruction can be specified in the notification.

Logging rejected consignments on IPAFFS

BCPs should ensure that the details of the rejected consignment are entered onto the IPAFFS system so that other BCPs can access the information.

BCPs will be able to view information about rejected consignments that result in a Border Notification, and those which are inclusive of intensified official controls, across all other BCPs.

Intensified official controls

If a consignment is rejected because a serious or repeated infringement has been found (including excess residues), the competent authority will follow the procedures in Regulation 22 of TARP 2011, triggering intensified official controls.

Products dangerous to animal or public health

Where veterinary checks reveal that the consignment presents a risk to public or animal health, the Official Inspector should take charge of the consignment and arrange for its destruction. The importer must meet all costs arising.

The importer should be notified of:

- the rejection
- the reasons for rejection
- the right of appeal by judicial review

Where a consignment has been rejected because it is a risk to public or animal health, a Border Notification must be completed on IPAFFS.

Safeguard measures

Consignments that are rejected for failure to meet conditions laid down in any specific safeguard measures that are currently in place may have to be destroyed, depending on the circumstances.

Consignments contaminated with residues

Consignments contaminated with veterinary drug residues listed in Table **1** of retained EU Regulation 37/2010 must be destroyed in line with Article 66 to 72 of the OCR.

Consignments that are contaminated with specific veterinary drug residues listed in Table **2** of Regulation 37/2010 may be re dispatched at the discretion of the Official Inspector, as an alternative to destruction - if this is considered to be an appropriate measure to protect human and animal health.
When acting on adverse drug residue results, Official Inspectors should:

- consider whether redispatch is an appropriate measure to protect public health, after you have agreed the destination with the operator responsible for the consignment
    - for consignments that will be re-dispatched, complete Part 1 of the excess residues form and pass it to the operator, so they can carry out the work to identify the recipient and ensure the form is returned to you, in line with Regulation 20 of the TARP Regulations 2011
    - if the consignment is to be destroyed, issue a Notice under Regulation 35 of the TARP Regulations 2011
- ensure that the action is reported by completing a Border Notification, once the action has been agreed with the operator
- ensure that HMRC are notified of the decision, and record any decision to redispatch the consignment on the Automatic Licence Verification System (ALVS)

Minor discrepancies in documentation

In a small number of cases, consignments may be presented with documentation that has minor discrepancies and does not fully meet the import requirements, but that does not support an immediate rejection of the consignment.

In such cases, the BCP can contact the APHA CIT to determine what action should be taken. APHA CIT must be contacted without delay, and the Official Inspector must keep a full record of the circumstances around the referral.

Serious and / or repeated infringements

Official Inspectors must act if they become aware of any serious or repeated breaches of import and biosecurity regulations during veterinary checks. In such circumstances, the enforcement authority may require additional physical checks and samples to be taken from the source/product for testing during subsequent consignments, in line with Article 6 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1873, as amended by The Official Controls (Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.) (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

Based on their professional judgement and experience, if the OI suspects fraud or deception is being committed by an operator, or that products entering GB:

- have breached import requirements; or
- have exceeded their maximum allowed residue levels

the OI must:

- carry out a physical check on the consignment
- tell the operator that checks are being undertaken, and that they will need to provide a guarantee or deposit to cover the costs of sample tests or laboratory analysis
- notify the Food Standards Agency (FSA) by raising a Border Notification on IPAFFS

Information to be entered on IPAFFS

In this situation, IPAFFS is used to:

- notify any breach(es) identified at the BCP
- check if a sample is needed before the consignment can be released
- enter sample results, allowing the consignment to be released

Consignments requiring samples must be held at the BCP until the results are known.
If the consignment does not meet import conditions, it should be treated in accordance with the rules for rejected consignments.

Examples of serious infringements

- faecal contamination of meat
- microbiological failures
- excessive histamine levels in certain fish
- excessive contaminants such as heavy metals
- any breach of:
    - residue limits in line with Table 1 and Table 2 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 37/2010
    - import conditions that risk public health and result in a Border Notification on IPAFFS
- any rejection on the grounds of risk to animal health

Repeated infringements might include multiple positive test results from routine samples taken from consignments of the same nature, originating from the same country. For example, levels of Salmonella or Enterobacteriaceae in excess of guarantees on health certification, or meat products certified with the wrong heat treatment.

Returned consignments

Re-import of GB export goods rejected by another country

Goods originating from Great Britain that have been rejected by the competent authority of another country must re-enter GB via a BCP designated for the commodities being returned.

Returned consignments will be subject to 100% documentary and identity checks, and physical checks as appropriate.

Goods must be sent back to the 'establishment of origin', unless authorised (by APHA CIT, Food Standards Agency, or Food Standards Scotland) to be sent to another destination, or when the returned goods are destroyed because there is a serious risk to animal or public health.

Returned goods must follow monitoring procedures.

Returned goods are only allowed to leave a BCP in a leakproof container or means of transport which has been sealed by Customs or by the Official Inspector at that BCP.

Goods that have been refused entry to another country need to be accompanied by the original health certificate.

The importer needs to provide in writing:

- reasons why entry into the other country was refused
- a guarantee which validates that transport and storage conditions have been met
- a declaration for goods in unsealed containers, saying that the goods have only been handled for unloading purposes
- a certificate from the carrier for goods in sealed containers, saying that the contents have not been unloaded from the container at any point.

If these documents cannot be provided, the goods must be destroyed.

If an export certificate was not originally needed, the importer will not need one for re-importing the goods, as specified in the Import of Animal Products returned from Third Countries import information note.

Information to be entered on the Common Health Entry Document
APHA CIT will receive a copy of the CHED and will confirm they have received it when it reaches its destination.

If APHA CIT confirmation is not received at the BCP, the local APHA liaison officer must be contacted and asked to investigate.

Where follow-up action is needed, the Official Inspector should record any movements in the register of consignments.

Imports bound for Customs Warehouses, ships' stores, and other specified destinations

Border Control Post officers may be asked to clear goods that are to be moved directly to a ship, or to an oil rig in international waters.

All such consignments must meet veterinary health requirements for GB, but do not need to meet GB public health requirements, as they are not intended for the domestic market.

Importers must specify that the products are for entry into a warehouse or store, otherwise full checks will need to be carried out

Pre-import declaration for products destined for a Customs warehouse or ships' store

Importers must declare goods going to an approved Customs warehouse or ships' store, before they arrive at a BCP.

The importer must state on Part 1 of the CHED that the goods are:

- for a warehouse or ships' store
- to be released into free circulation (and meet the import conditions)
- to be re-exported to another country
- ships' supplies

If the goods are not declared, the Official Inspector will check them fully, then accept or reject them.

Consignments destined for a Customs warehouse or ships' store and subsequent release into free circulation

If the goods meet GB requirements after going through the usual BCP checks, the importer will be given a CHED in the normal way, regardless of the destination of the goods.

For non-compliant goods, a CHED will only be issued if veterinary certification or other relevant documentation is available. Entry will be refused if these documents are not available.

The Official Inspector must also have the relevant certificate for goods in transit. A list of products can be found in the Importer Information Notes.

If the importer cannot provide these documents, or the Official Inspector believes that transit or storage will create a health risk, entry will be refused.

Consignments directly to a vessel from another country must be handled in line with The Import of and Trade in Animals and Animal Products Regulations 2019.

Consignments leaving a ships' store do not need to leave via a BCP.

Consignments not fit for subsequent release into free circulation and movement from ships' stores to docked vessels in GB

Consignments that are not fit for free circulation, but that have been held in an approved GB customs warehouse, must leave GB via the BCP of entry within 15 days of departure from the zone or warehouse.

Consignments exiting a ships' store do not need to go out via a BCP if they are to be used to restock ships' galleys.

Consignments can be moved from an approved ships' store in GB to a ship docked in a GB port.

The ships' store will issue a certificate based on the model in Regulation 2019/2128, and in line with Regulation 2019/2124, and the ship's captain or port health authority (PHA) will complete and return it when the goods are received.

Goods may only be stored in an approved GB warehouse or ships' store if they come from countries that are allowed to export that product type to GB.

Goods which are bound for an approved warehouse or ships' store but are not fit for free circulation, must have HMRC or Border Force seals attached to the vehicle or container when they leave the BCP.

The costs of all BCP operations relating to consignments not fit for free circulation will be recovered from the importer or agent.

Transit declarations for ship supplies

The person responsible for the consignment must submit a transit declaration to Customs on the New Computerised Transit System (NCTS).

Once the consignment has been released by the PHA, Customs will create a T1 document and provide it to the person responsible for the consignment.

Specified risk material

Imported animals and animal products derived from bovine, ovine or caprine animals must meet the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, which lays down rules designed to prevent, control and eradicate Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE).

Annex V of Regulation 999/2001 applies to production and placing on the market of live animals, embryos, ova, and products of animal origin, and in certain specific cases to exports.

The Regulation does not apply to:

- cosmetic or medicinal products or medical devices, or to their starting materials or intermediate products
- products which are not intended for use in human food, animal feed or fertilisers, or to their starting materials or intermediate products
- products of animal origin intended for exhibition, teaching, scientific research, special studies, or analysis, provided those products are not eventually consumed or used by humans or by animals other than those kept for the research projects concerned
- live animals used in or intended for research

It is up to importers to satisfy the Official Inspectors that any imports of the listed products will not eventually be consumed, and sufficient safeguards are in place to prevent this happening.

Specific parts of bovine, ovine and caprine animals are regarded as Specified Risk Material (SRM) under Annex V of 999/2001. TSEs are found in SRM, which is why as a precautionary measure they are removed at abattoirs.

Retained EU Commission Decision 2007/453/EC categorises all countries as either a negligible, controlled, or undetermined Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) risk.

Training Official Inspectors and BCP staff

Prior to appointment at a BCP, all staff must undertake a short period of practical training.

Active Official Inspectors

If you are an active Official Veterinarian (OV) or Official Fish Inspector and want to be considered for future training courses, please contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency Centre for International Trade (APHA CIT).

Defra, APHA, and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) hold update training once a year. Appointed Ovs and OFIs are expected to attend an update training course at least once every two years.

Brief notes should be kept of internal meetings where information from update training is cascaded to other staff.

Professional staff are directly responsible for fulfilling their own continuing professional development (CPD) obligations.

Flexible use of Border Control Post facilities

BCP facilities used for products for human consumption (HC), and products not for human consumption (NHC)

OCR Regulation states that plant and plant products cannot share any areas with products of animal origin (POAO) and composite products, except where specific derogations are met – these are comprehensively detailed in Article 3. 7-10 of Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/1014.

Facilities being used for germinal products and animal by-products (ABP) cannot be shared with products of non-animal origin (PNAO).

If BCP facilities are used for live animals, including equipment related to those animals, or storage rooms for their feed, then the facilities cannot be shared with goods referred to in Article 47(1) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, including POAO and ABP.

Detailed separation requirements for products of animal origin, animal by-products, germinal products, composite products and hay and straw are set out in point 3 of Article 6 of Regulation 2019/1014.
Facilities used for POAO, or composite products cannot be shared with other categories of goods, unless they comply with the conditions of the derogation. These facilities are:

- areas or rooms where goods are to be unloaded
- inspection rooms or inspection areas
- storage areas and rooms, including cold storage rooms

Derogations from the separation requirements apply to the areas listed above. These derogations apply to:

- BCPs designated for packed goods only
- BCPs designated for packed goods and unpacked goods if the competent authorities, in agreement with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA):
    - carry out a risk assessment of the BCP and implement standard operating procedures to prevent cross-contamination between consignments
    - produce and implement standard operating procedures to ensure that there is time separation for handling packed and unpacked

goods, and during the time separation the facilities are cleaned and disinfected

The derogations don't apply where storage areas or rooms are used for the storage of bulk ABP.

Animal feed of non-animal origin

Local authorities (Trading Standards) carry out inspections under Feed Hygiene regulations although The City of London is an exception to this. or the BCP to be used by another enforcement authority, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the relevant LA and the other authority / authorities will be needed.

If the BCP has separate HC and NHC facilities, the feed should be inspected in the NHC facility, but can be inspected in the HC inspection area if necessary.

Any unpacked goods must have a time separation and risk assessment agreed with APHA.

Food of non-animal origin

In general, FNAO import requirements state that relevant food must comply with GB Law. The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 provide for the execution and enforcement of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004. The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 give enforcement officials discretion to examine consignments.

FNAO must be inspected in the facilities dedicated for phytosanitary checks.

Goods checked under Food Safety legislation should be inspected in the HC facility.

The legislation controlling FNAO imported into the UK is Regulation 2017/625 on official controls, which is enforced by the Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2009 (as amended). All local authorities (whether they have seaports, airports and external temporary storage facilities (ETSF) in their districts) are responsible for enforcing these regulations.

High risk food of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)

High risk food of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) can be inspected in the POAO facility.

HRFNAO can be inspected in an HC or NHC facility - if suitable Standard Operating Procedures, veterinary risk assessments, and MOUs between LA and the relevant authorities are in place.

Some products (for example turmeric) can easily contaminate other consignments due to being fine powders.

Products of known or emerging risk from certain countries are specified in Annex I of Regulation 2019/1793 and are subject to the enhanced import controls provided for by Article 47 of Regulation 2017/625. Such products may only enter the GB through designated BCPs following pre-notification using Part I of the Common Health Entry Document (CHED), and will be subject to documentary checks as well as identity and physical checks at specified frequencies which are detailed in the Annex to the Regulation.

On completion of the required checks, the Official Inspector will complete, stamp and sign Part II of the CHED. This will accompany the consignment inland to the first destination.

Certain products susceptible to aflatoxin contamination from specific countries are set out in Annex II of Regulation 2019/1793. These products must undergo documentary checks at a BCP and will also be subject to identity and physical checks at certain frequencies which are laid down in the Regulation.

On completion of the import controls, Part II of the CHED is completed, and the document must accompany the food or feed until it is released for free circulation in the GB.

Time separation is required between the handling of different consignments of unpacked goods, and between the handling of consignments of unpacked and packed goods.

During the time separation the facilities should be cleaned and disinfected.

Goods that can be inspected in the HC facility:

- plastic food wrapping
- live fish, crustaceans and shellfish
- snails for human consumption

Goods that can be inspected in the NHC facility:

- semen and embryos can be inspected in the ambient facility
- ABP technical products, for example laboratory samples and diagnostic kits
- Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) eggs for vaccine production

Allergens

Allergens should ideally be inspected in a dedicated facility with:

- an unloading area
- an inspection room
- a changing room
- dedicated cleaning equipment

Border Control Posts - geographical and structural requirements, and non-compliance measures

Location of the BCP

BCPs must be located in the immediate vicinity of the point of entry for imported goods, except where the location complies with legal 'derogations' allowing a non-adjacent location, where this required by specific geographical constraints.

For railways, the BCP can be at the first terminal station after the rail line has crossed the border between two countries.

The BCP must be within the curtilage of the import point of entry and its customs zone. Any variation from this would need explicit approval from Defra (OCR Team).

Within the point of entry customs zone, a BCP inspection facility may be split up into discrete facilities handling specific products or functions. There may be as many of these as circumstances require. Movements around separate facilities within a BCP will require a Standard Operating Procedure, setting out how the BCP can deliver its checking functions compliantly: this will be a condition of the final audit approval by APHA and Defra, without which a BCP cannot be designated.

BCPs located at a distance

Specific geographical constraints at the immediate vicinity of the point of entry may allow a BCP to be located at a distance from the import point of entry it is serving. The specific circumstances where this will be legally permitted are laid out in Article 3 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/1012.

A BCP may be authorised to be located at a distance from the point of entry, if one or more of the following geographical constraints exists, in a way that would prevent or restrict the efficient performance of official controls and other official activities:

- points of entry with a geographical configuration that imposes major constraints on the transportation system
- points of entry subject to recurrent floods in certain periods of the year

- maritime wharves surrounded by cliffs
- border roads which cross a high pass
- rail transport of animals and goods which makes it necessary to locate the BCP at the first station stop
- points of entry with no suitable land to enable the BCP and its facilities to be in their immediate vicinity

The following conditions must also apply:

- the distance of the BCP from the point of entry is commensurate to the need to overcome the constraints of geography and does not go beyond that need
- the BCP and the point of entry must be under the competence of the same Customs authority

BCP structure

The BCP facilities must be sufficient to enable checks to be carried out on all consignments required to be presented for veterinary checks.

A BCP consists of facilities dedicated to veterinary checks, placed under the responsibility of the Official Inspector (OV or OFI), and set out so that the facilities constitute one complete working unit.

Where a BCP is made up of more than one set of facilities but located on the same site and within the same Customs zone, the BCP will be identified as one designated unit with one name for all facilities.

BCP facilities must include:

- an office with communication equipment including:
    - a telephone
    - a computer with internet access for use of the Import of products, animals, food, and feed system (IPAFFS)
    - a photocopier
    - all necessary documentation
    - archiving capacity to store documents relating to the inspection of products

- social rooms for the use of the personnel working in the BCP, which may be shared only with other personnel involved in official controls. These rooms are:
    - changing rooms
    - toilets
    - hand washing facilities

- an area for unloading the means of transport of consignments which should be enclosed or covered by a roof, except in the case of the following consignments which are transported in boats, for which the roof requirement may not apply:
    - non-containerised wool
    - loose bulk processed animal protein not fit for human consumption
    - loose manure or guano
    - bulk liquid oils and fats,

- for products under temperature control intended for human consumption, the junction between the transport and unloading areas should be protected or sealed from the external environment, except in the case of fish where during unloading and landing, contamination of fishery products must be avoided

- an inspection room where the products are to be inspected and samples taken for further tests. However, the sampling area does not need to be separate from the inspection room

- appropriate storage rooms or areas, to permit detained consignments to be held at chilled, frozen, or ambient temperatures at the same time, under the control of the OV pending the results of laboratory or other investigations.

The BCP must have appropriate hygiene facilities for carrying out routine analyses, and for taking and processing samples in compliance with GB biosecurity regulations.

The facilities provided at the BCP must, as a minimum, be sufficient for Sanitary checks to be carried out on all categories of commodity for which the BCP has been designated.

In the case of deep-frozen semen, embryos, by-products or blood products for pharmaceutical or technical use, which may be transported at ambient temperatures in sealed, self-contained, temperature regulating containers, these may be inspected in BCPs listed for products not for human consumption that are at ambient temperatures only.

The BCP must have premises and temperature-controlled facilities allowing for storage of part-consignments taken for analysis, and products whose release for free circulation has not been authorised.

BCPs approved to handle chilled, frozen and ambient categories of product, must be able to simultaneously store adequate volumes of product in each temperature category. Immediate access to an adequate volume of storage shall be available at all times as necessary for the Official Inspector.

Use of commercial storage facilities

The use of commercial storage facilities - close to the BCP, and within the same port or customs area - is permitted under the control of the Official Inspector, and provided that the detained product is stored in a separate lockable room, chamber, or zone clearly fenced off from all other products, in line with Article 3 (11) (12) of retained Regulation 2019/1014.

Storage in separate stand-alone containers permanently placed by the unloading area is permitted - provided that the containers are linked to the unloading area in such a manner that the unloading process is under shelter from the weather.

Additional storage for each product category in the means of transport in which a consignment was brought to the post is permitted, under the control of the Official Inspector for BCPs situated at road, rail or port locations in line with Article 3 (13) of retained Regulation 2019/1014.

Products for human consumption and products not for human consumption should be handled in separate unloading areas, inspection rooms and storage facilities. In the case of BCPs officially approved as restricted to packed products only, derogations can allow for unloading areas, inspection rooms and storage facilities to be used for both types of products, provided that risk assessment and standard operating procedures are in place to prevent cross contamination.

For BCPs not restricted to packed products it is possible to use the same unloading areas and inspection rooms for human consumption (HC) and not for human consumption (NHC) consignments, providing that time separation and standard operating procedures are in place to prevent cross contamination.

However, since time separation is required, storage rooms must be dedicated to either HC or NHC - because the BCP must be able to store consignments simultaneously while awaiting approval and listing for the relevant commodities, in line with Article 3 (9) of retained Regulation 2019/1014.

BCPs must be constructed to provide an adequate degree of hygiene, and avoid cross contamination.

In rooms where products are to be unloaded, inspected or stored, the BCP or inspection centre must have:

- walls finished with smooth washable surfaces - which, together with the floors, should be easy to clean and disinfect, and with adequate drainage
- a clean and easily cleaned ceiling
- adequate natural and artificial lighting
- an adequate hot and cold-water supply in all inspection rooms

For BCPs handling chilled and frozen products, the inspection room must be under temperature control.

Inspection Centres

BCPs may comprise one or more Inspection Centres, to carry out official controls and other official activities on the categories of animals and goods that are within the scope of the BCP's designation.

The facilities at any IC should be appropriate to the volume and type of products passing through the centre.

Inspection centres must comply with the minimum requirements for BCPs.

The requirements of Article 64(3)(f) of retained EU Regulation 2017/625 shall not apply to inspection centres which have access to the technology and equipment for the operation of the relevant information management system

for official controls referred to in Article 131 of that Regulation, and to other computerised information management systems available in another facility of the same border control post.

Inspection centres must be:

- Under the remit of the same customs authority of the border control post.
- Under the control of the competent authority of the border control post.

When a BCP is split into different inspection centres, these must:

- be located within the same customs designated area or district as the BCP under which the centres are listed
- be located within a reasonable working distance from the designated central office of the BCP and be demonstrably under the control of the official inspector
- keep a specific record of the consignments examined at the centre

The central competent authority shall **list** each inspection centre (as defined here) together with the relevant designated BCP, in accordance with the format set out in Article 59 of retained EU Regulation 2017/625 (Annex 1). This information shall also specify the categories of animals and goods which are controlled in Inspection Centres, in accordance with Article 7.

The competent authority must remove Inspection Centres from this list, if they cease to comply with the requirements noted above on volumes and compliance.

BCP infrastructure requirements - further details

- Each BCP must have evidence that the BCP is approved by local customs as a Customs controlled shed. (Exact customs approval category to be stated). This should be made available to Defra/APHA if required.

- Copies of the approved site plans for each BCP should be held available in the BCP. These plans should show the position of the BCP in the overall context of the port/airport and the customs designated area, and details of the facility and the flow of products and personnel through it. There should also be a clear indication of any other control

boundaries in relation to the BCP - for example, the airside or landside boundary at airports.

- When considering whether the size and layout of a BCP is adequate, it is necessary to consider the number, size and flow pattern of consignments, together with the type of products to be handled.

- The layout and organisation of the BCP must be considered to ensure that the flow of products and personnel cannot result in cross contamination.

- Storage facilities should be capable of holding at least one average sized consignment of each category of goods passing through the BCP. There is some flexibility in where storage should be located, but this basic amount of storage capacity must be permanently available at the BCP. Where consignments of bulk products, such as Processed Animal Protein (PAP), wool or fishery products are in excess of the average, use of commercial stores is permitted under Chapter 1, Article 3 (11) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1014.

- If ambient, chilled or frozen consignments are handled by the BCP, facilities must enable each type of consignment to be stored at the appropriate temperature, at the same time. It should also be possible to store cleared, detained and rejected goods separately and compliantly with biosecurity. Subject to acceptable cleansing and disinfection between uses, each store may be used flexibly provided it has temporary labelling as to the purpose. This does not reduce the number of stores required but does mean that stores of differing sizes could be used appropriately, or contaminated stores set aside for overnight deep cleaning.

- The use of separate stand-alone containers for storage is acceptable provided they are sited permanently and linked by covered/enclosed walkways as appropriate to the product category.

- The BCP should have a contingency plan for emergency additional storage for exceptional circumstances. Containers/reefer units may be acceptable, providing that goods can be loaded and unloaded hygienically.

- The inspection room/area should include a fridge/freezer for holding of samples awaiting dispatch to the laboratory or retained reference samples. This also applies to ambient-only BCPs.

- The BCP must be constructed so that hygiene requirements, and any temperature requirements appropriate for the product concerned (as set out in the Hygiene Regulations) can be met.

- Consideration needs to be given to the construction materials used, to ensure that the structure is easily cleanable and does not have dirt traps, cracks, gaps etc, that could result in contamination of consignments for inspection.

- Photocopiers should be capable of copying A3 double page certificates. However, in low throughput premises combined fax/copiers are acceptable provided there is local access to better facilities should heavier workloads require it.

- Consider the need for separate sinks for equipment cleaning and for hand washing, and the need for non-hand operable taps in the latter case, taking into account health and safety requirements. Hot water, hand soap, and disposable towels must be available. Hand sanitizer should be provided as best practice.

- Consideration should be given to the need for temperature control in the loading and storage areas, depending on the cold chain requirements of the products inspected at the BCP. If loading bays are purely quick transfer corridors, then no chilling will be necessary. However, if temperature controlled products are to be held in this area it must be chilled. Where products are stored under temperature-controlled conditions for over 24 hours a recording thermometer should be installed.

- Toilets and changing facilities must be for sole use by personnel working in the inspection centre and shared only with other personnel involved in official controls.

- Clothing worn for inspection should be stored in a locker or cupboard. Port staff working in the BCP should also wear protective clothing and either share or have a separate changing room available, protective BCP wear

should not be worn outside the inspection areas. here bulk products not intended for human consumption are to be inspected, a shower should be available.

- Boot washing facilities should be provided on entry and exit of the inspection areas. Plastic overshoes or suitable alternatives may be used if required.

- A storage room or cupboard must be provided for cleansing and disinfecting materials.

- The BCP must have a documented maintenance plan, as it is important to ensure that the BCP facilities, structure and fabric are maintained to a suitable standard. Requests for maintenance and outcomes should be documented for audit.

- Water supplies must be tested for potability every 6 months, and a pest control programme must be in place to demonstrate the necessary hygiene standards in line with Hygiene Regulations.

Suspension of a BCP

Where BCP facilities seriously breach the requirements laid down in the OCR 2017/635 and 2019/1014, the Secretary of State has a duty under Regulation 11 of The Trade in Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011 to suspend the operation of the BCP.

APHA are the competent authority responsible for monitoring and audit of compliance at all designated BCPs.

APHA may become aware of issues of non-compliance at a BCP through routine audits, spot check audits, or visits to discuss third party reports of potential compliance issues. If the compliance is not assessed by APHA as being a significant public health or biosecurity risk, the BCP operator will be asked to take remedial measures within a reasonable period (set by APHA).

If the non-compliance is immediately assessed as a serious / significant rosk, or in cases where an operator fails to address routine non-compliance within the agreed timeline, APHA will recommend to Defra either that the BCP is formally notified by Defra that it will be suspended at a date agreed between Defra and APHA – or that the BCP should be immediately suspended, due to the risk to public health or biosecurity.

Once a BCP has been suspended, Defra must remove it from the online list of designated BCPs and from IPAFFS.

The premises concerned may not operate as a BCP for the categories of product suspended from the date that notice of suspension is given, unless and until the suspension is lifted.

Suspension will only be lifted if:

- the deficiencies at the BCP have been rectified
- Defra or the devolved administration has inspected the BCP and agrees that it meets the required standards

Following an APHA inspection, APHA will mandate an appropriate and proportionate period in which the BCP will be required to rectify the issues identified.

A BCP which does not rectify the matters for which it has been suspended, to the satisfaction of the APHA Audit staff, and within the set time of its suspension, **will have its designation permanently revoked at the end of the suspension period**.

Border Control Posts - approval to build new facilities, or amend existing facilities

BCPs should only be built or significantly altered if proposals have been submitted to the Defra OCR Team as a formal Expression of Interest, using the BI39 template which can be requested from defra-ocr@defra.gov.uk - and have been formally approved by the Defra Designation Panel.

Approval of an EoI will allow APHA and all other relevant competent authorities to engage with the current or potential BCP operator, to provide information on the likely compliance of the process of building a new BCP or altering existing facilities.

This support is critical to the likelihood of a new or amended BCP meeting all legal compliance requirements, securing a successful final audit from APHA. Without this cleared final audit, Defra will not be able to approve any BCP facility for designation, as a qualified final audit will indicate that the facilities are not legally compliant.

Once an EoI has been approved, APHA and other competent authorities (as appropriate) will comment on layout plans for BCPs in England, and field force staff will maintain contact with the operators at each site, from plan approval to final designation. Defra will advise APHA on any policy or legal interpretative issues arising and seek to support the whole process and act as compliance mediators, if there are significant contested points arising during build.

In Scotland, the competent authority is Food Standards Scotland or the Scottish Government. In Wales, the competent authority is the Welsh Government.

Procedure for submission

Applications for new facilities, or expansion and alteration of existing facilities should be submitted using the process outlined in the guidance for applying to set up a BCP.

Information required for BCP site and operational plans

- a brief overview of the volume and nature of trade at the port or airport where the BCP will be situated
- an outline of any known proposed developments in the port or airport that might affect future throughput or product type
- description of the geography of the port or airport, its port authority and Customs boundaries
- anticipated BCP throughput:
    - the product range for which approval is being sought, including whether at:
        - ambient chilled or frozen temperatures
        - whether it is for or not for human consumption.
    - information on anticipated volumes of these products, including the nature and size of individual packages and any bulk consignments
- whether the same facilities will be used for human consumption and not for human consumption products.

Staff / procedures

- how many official veterinarians (OVs), official fish inspectors (OFIs) and technical staff will work at the BCP
- what training have they undergone
- how is it anticipated that staff would remain up to date with legislation
- whether checklists will be used for inspections
- how staff will access instructions or guidance

Plans

- a site plan of port to show the port boundary and location of all proposed BCP facilities, including:
    - detached inspection centres (which must be within effective working distance of the main BCP, noting that documentary checks may be undertaken remotely from the consignment.)
    - security points
    - Customs boundaries
- a floor plan at scale of between 1:100 and 1:250 showing the layout of the BCP with each of the facilities required under retained Commission Decision 2001/812/EC clearly labelled using the terms in the Decision and including:
    - office social rooms
    - area for unloading with appropriate cover

    - inspection room
    - storage rooms
    - archive room
- detailed room plan at 1:50 to show details such as position of handwash basins and sterilisers where the floor plan is not able to show this clearly
- elevations of such areas as unloading areas where they contribute to understanding the proposal

All plans must include a reference number and revision date.

Description of flow lines

- flow lines for consignments (human consumption and non-human consumption separately) and rejected consignments.
- flow lines for personnel (inspection staff and dedicated staff working in the BCP, including drivers and so on if applicable)

These flow lines should be described and illustrated on an additional copy of the outline plan.

Description of premises

- Location of entrances and details of unloading arrangements and how it will be assured that the vehicle docking arrangement complies with requirements to protect against entry of pests and environmental contamination (minimum of a roof for packaged only products – but see exceptions in Commission Decision 2001/812)
- Details on how adequate storage will be achieved including reference to the floor areas and volumes of storage at each proposed temperature and status
    - Details of any stand-alone reefers to be used and how they are linked to the BCP
    - Details of any commercial storage facilities to be used and how the storage area used by the BCP will be separated from commercial storage areas
- Details of inspection rooms, samples rooms/laboratory (if present) and changing facilities. This should include provision for the hygienic handling (washing, sterilisation etc. as appropriate) and storage (rooms, cupboards and lockers) of inspection equipment and protective clothing, measures to ensure that washrooms etc. are only used by dedicated

BCP staff and provision of additional facilities (if appropriate) for non-inspection staff, for example vehicle drivers and ancillary workers
- Details of any temperature control arrangements in unloading areas and inspection rooms
- The finish of walls, floors, ceilings, drainage, lighting in each room
- Description of water supply to include such matters as hot water supplies, wastewater control and drainage
- Description of sampling arrangements and storage
- Description of equipment storage arrangements
- Description of cleaning procedures and frequency and storage arrangements for cleaning materials and equipment
- Details of any container seal check areas to be used
- Procedures for disposal of rejected consignments

Other facilities outside the BCP

- Location of Port Health Authority office, if not in the BCP
- Location of Port/Airport Authority office
- Location of Border Force office
- Location of laboratories that will be used for testing samples
- Location of waste/rejected consignment facilities that comply with Regulation 1069/2009

Other information

- Have HMRC indicated their willingness to provide Customs approval for the facility?
- Will fishery products be inspected by Port Health staff in the absence of an OV?

Equipment and access requirements at the Border Control Post

Required equipment in BCPs and Inspection Centres

BCPs and ICs must have, as a minimum, the following items are always available:

- equipment (or access to equipment) capable of weighing consignments that are subject to checks
- any equipment needed to open and examine consignments presented for examination
- cleansing and disinfection equipment, adequately housed and appropriate to the needs of the post, or an effective and documented system of cleansing and disinfection by an external agent
- equipment to maintain the temperature at the appropriate level in controlled environment rooms

The inspection equipment should be stored hygienically in the area where it is used.

Where there are separate Inspection Centres at the BCP, each must have its own equipment.

BCPs approved for handling semen and embryos must have appropriate safety equipment, container opening tools and access to a nearby source of liquid nitrogen.

Where BCPs are listed for unpackaged products and no hanging equipment is available within the BCP, a contingency plan should be in place for handling carcasses or whole fish, even if this is not part of the BCPs regular trade.

Import of products, animals, food, and feed system (IPAFFS) access at the BCP

Each BCP must have appropriate equipment for the rapid exchange of information, particularly with other BCPs through the IPAFFS system.

A computer must be provided for access to IPAFFS. Passwords must be kept up to date so that access is possible.

A contingency plan should be in place in the event of IPAFFS technical or access issues.

Required equipment in inspection rooms

In inspection rooms, as a minimum, the following must be available:

- a table to work on with smooth surfaces easy to clean and disinfect
- sampling equipment - saw, knife, tin opener, a means of sampling consignments and sample containers
- sealing tape and numbered seals or labels, clearly marked to ensure traceability
- a thermometer to measure surface and core temperature, weighing scales, and for fresh products a pH meter
- thawing equipment or microwave oven
- facilities for the temporary storage of samples under temperature control, pending their dispatch to the laboratory. Suitable containers for transport of these samples should also be available.

Sampling equipment should include a range of containers, labels, and seals.

Where a BCP has separate inspection rooms for products intended for human consumption and for products not intended for human consumption, each should have its own set of inspection tools.

The lists of equipment should be seen as a minimum. Any other tools which will help in the examinations should also be present, for example scissors, seal tools, salt meter, crate opening tools and so on. The tools should be held in the BCP at all times, and not in any other location such as vehicles.

BCPs and Inspection Centres with restricted listing

BCPs and inspection centres with restricted listing must have all equipment and items as appropriate for the designated products to be handled in the BCP.

Laboratory and disposal services

The BCP must have access to the services of a specialised approved laboratory able to carry out specialised analyses on samples taken at the BCP.

The BCP must have the address of rendering or incineration premises which can carry out treatment of products for disposal in accordance with The Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013 laying down the veterinary rules for the handling, disposal and processing of animal by-products.

Checks and audits at the Border Control Post

The Official Inspector must ensure that the correct equipment and facilities are available at the BCP to allow effective checks and audits to be conducted.

Verification checks on facilities and equipment

The Official Inspector should inspect all BCP facilities regularly and record the findings of these inspections on the verification checklist template provided by APHA. The checklist includes, but is not limited to, information to ensure that:

- BCPs and any commercial storage facilities are maintained to the appropriate hygiene standards
- the structure of the BCP is well maintained
- facilities remain adequate for the commodity type(s) designated for that BCP, including storage and handling space sufficient to manage the volume of import trade
- cleaning and disinfecting equipment and instructions for use, or a documented system of cleaning and disinfection provided by contractors
- equipment is available in all inspection centres appropriate for the designated commodities to be checked, and is clean and ready for use
- necessary IT equipment is available
- there is a memorandum of understanding in place where facilities are shared with other regulatory bodies

Reporting problems

If the Official Inspector identifies an infringement within the BCP facilities, this must be reported to the operator and the local competent authority without delay. APHA should be kept informed of the infringement and be copied into communications. If the deficiency is ultimately not resolved, then BCP designation could be suspended and/or withdrawn.

The Official Inspector should report any problems in writing to the port operator and agree on appropriate remedial action. A copy of this report should be sent to the local APHA liaison officer (who can be contacted via APHA CIT on 03000 200 301 or Imports@apha.gov.uk). If helpful, the APHA liaison officer will be able to advise on the draft report before this is sent to the operator.

An action plan should be finalised within 4 weeks.

If the operator does not agree to the plan:

- by the agreed deadline, the Official Inspector should write again and ask for a reply within 2 weeks
- after the additional 2 weeks, the Official Inspector should inform their APHA liaison officer, who will consider and advise the BCP on next steps.

The Official Inspector can write again to the operator if the plan needs updating, or the proposed timeline requires an extension. It will be for the APHA liaison officer to determine whether there is an acceptable reason for an extension to the action timeline. Any such amendments must be confirmed in writing to the port operator.

If the port operator does not correct the problem within the agreed timetable, the APHA liaison officer must be informed so they can consider further action (which may include suspension).

Port Health Authority (PHA) verification checks

The PHA must verify that checks are carried out in accordance with the regulatory requirements and documented procedures.

Article 12 of the Official Controls Regulation (OCR), subsequently amended by domestic legislation, requires the PHA to maintain documented procedures for:

- performing official controls
- taking corrective actions in all cases
- updating documented procedures as appropriate

PHA staff should carry out the verification checks. In general, these checks should be carried out every 3 months. Changes to the frequency must be discussed with the APHA liaison officer.

PHA may record their findings on a verification checklist available from APHA.

Verification checks and their results must be recorded, together with evidence of any follow-up action taken. This information must be presented to APHA during the audit visit or upon request.

Training and continuing professional development (CPD) for BCP staff

Professional staff must fulfil their CPD obligations. The PHA should provide training to their port staff in accordance with regulation 2019/1081.

The PHA should actively identify the training needs at each BCP for which they are the competent authority, to ensure checks are carried out in accordance with the latest amendments on official controls. Training records must be kept and made available for APHA audits.

If training needs are identified which could be included in the APHA update training, these topics should be sent to APHA CIT.

APHA audit visits

The lead Official Inspector must be present and must lead on all APHA audit visits.

The lead Official Inspector must inform APHA of:

- any corrective actions taken since the last APHA audit
- any communication with the port operator to correct other issues identified during regular veterinary inspections

APHA uses audit checklists to assess compliance with UK imports legislation.

The visits will be carried out by regional officers and will be independently scrutinised by Defra. If BCP verification procedures are found to be unsatisfactory, APHA may increase the number of audit visits.

Key contact details, and links to further advice

BCP Manual (Version 1.2, March 2024)

For any general queries relating to this Manual, please contact the BCP Manual inbox – BCPManual@defra.gov.uk

Defra, APHA and APHA CIT

Imports to Great Britain of all 'sanitary and phytosanitary' products ('SPS' - including animals, plants, animal and plant products and composites, food and feed) must comply with all relevant biosecurity regulations, safeguards and enforcements. The key areas of legislation for these SPS imports include the Official Controls Regulation 2019, (as amended by EU Exit Regulations 1 and 2), and the Trade In Animals and Related Products (TARP) Regulations 2011.

For information on BCP designation governance and currently designated BCPs, contact the Defra BCP Designation Team inbox - defra-ocr@defra.gov.uk

Importers who need information about the import conditions of a particular consignment can contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency Centre for International Trade (APHA CIT) on either 03000 200 301 or Imports@apha.gov.uk

Specific animal and animal product import information, developed by APHA and Defra, can also be found on:

- The Border Target Operating Model, which sets out recommendations on how the GB border with the European Union will work from 2024, after the post-Exit transition period
- Health certification for imports
- General licences and authorisations to import live animals or animal products
- Guidance on importing live animals, animal products and high risk food and feed not of animal origin from non-EU countries to Great Britain
- Guidance on the import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS)
- OVS notes
- Importer Information Notes (IIN)

- List of establishments in non-EU countries approved to export animal products to the GB - Updated 8 June 2021 and
- Approved residue control plans from EU and EFTA states

Imports of plant and plant products

Information on plants and plant product imports is not currently covered in this BCP Manual. Extensive information on plant and plant product imports is available on the Defra Plant Health Controls website.

UK SPS Trade Assurance

Contact Defra's SPS Trade Assurance Team at ukassurance@defra.gov.uk for enquiries relating to:

- market access to the UK for live animals, products of animal origin, germinal products, animal by-products and hay and straw, including for new applications and changes to existing import conditions
- coordination of inspections following new applications, a review of import conditions, or following an incidents or outbreak
- updates to approved establishment lists for imports into Great Britain
- the UK's agri-food regulatory and assurance system

Enquiries can only be accepted from the competent authority. Any other enquiries will not be processed.

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

The Food Standards Agency has legislative responsibility for imports of fish and fishery products into England and Wales. Details can be found on the Food Standards Agency website.

Food Standards Scotland (FSS)

Food Standards Scotland has legislative responsibility for imports of fish and fishery products into Scotland. Details can be found on the Food Standards Scotland website.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

Customs approve a range of procedures by which goods may be imported into the UK. Although not an exhaustive list - and importers will need to check prior

to importation - some of the points importers may need to consider when importing those goods are:

- the need to make a formal Customs declaration which gives details of the goods being imported either at importation, or if approved, subsequently
- payment of Customs duty or VAT on the goods being imported

In addition to the animal health requirements, goods may also be subject to other import controls, such as those on endangered species (this includes their horns, furs and skins etc,) which require the presentation of separate documentation.

HMRC advice can be found on GOV.UK.

Each Border Control Post (BCP) should have up to date contacts for the local Customs office. Internal contact details must not be shared outside of the organisation.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Border Force is responsible for CITES enforcement. BCPs should keep local Border Force contact details up to date. Internal contact details must not be shared outside of the organisation.

Alternatively, the CITES Licensing Team in Bristol can be contacted on 03000 200 301 or wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk