



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Movement Assistance Scheme

Frequently asked questions

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The following FAQs aim to clarify some of the key questions surrounding the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).

This document will be updated regularly to keep traders and certifiers up to date with changes.

**Version 5.5 includes an update for testing uncastrated rams for Brucella Ovis (page 20).**

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# Introducing the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS)

## Why has MAS been set up?

Defra has set up MAS to support traders who move agri-food commodities from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI), including but not limited to:

- live animals
- products of animal origin
- plants and plant products
- organic products
- certain high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)

MAS provides financial support by reimbursing some of the costs of these new measures.

Through MAS, Defra is supporting traders to ensure they can trade goods from GB to NI in compliance with the requirements of the NI Protocol, including health, marketing standards and certain certification requirements.

## What does MAS do?

MAS provides support for traders moving agri-food goods and equines from GB to NI following the end of the EU exit transition period. First, it provides traders with assistance to understand the new regulations for moving goods from GB to NI. Second, MAS reimburses some of the costs that would be incurred by traders for moving agri-food commodities and equines under the new requirements. Traders of agri-foods moving from GB-NI that require certification can receive financial support for some of the direct costs of checking and issuing Export Health Certificates (EHCs), Phytosanitary Certificates (PCs) and Certificates of Inspection (COIs). MAS also reimburses the cost of official certificates (including lab sampling) required for the movement of HRFNAO listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#) and products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#). MAS support includes the audit inspection cost incurred to register with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) and ongoing audit costs, for the export of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers from GB to NI. It also includes costs related to testing sheep for scrapie as required for certification and, from 1 April 2022, Scrapie Qualifying Status (SQS). Traders also receive financial support for the costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI. In addition, some fees are covered for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB. Traders can also be reimbursed for some of the costs involved in obtaining support attestation (SA) certification for movements from GB to NI, where a certifying officer has indicated the need for additional assurance to support the issuing of EHCs.



## Who is MAS for?

MAS is set up to support traders who move agri-food goods from GB to NI. Certifiers can claim reimbursement of some of the direct costs, up to a set limit, for the checking and issuing of certification for certain consignments from GB to NI, and some other costs related to the new requirements:

- the testing of sheep for scrapie; the audit inspection cost incurred to register with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) and ongoing audit costs;
- costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI.;
- new costs for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB, and financial support for support attestations.

If a business is moving certain agri-foods (including but not limited to live animals, plants and plant products, organic products and certain HRFNAO) that require certification, the costs will be reimbursed by MAS. Note that MAS does not currently apply to Authorised Traders (supermarkets and their trusted suppliers). Authorised Traders can continue to move products from GB to NI without the need for official certification. Authorised Traders should continue to use the [STAMNI compliance declaration form](#) to move these goods from GB to NI.

## Should I contact Defra to support me when moving goods from GB to NI?

The first place to go to seek advice is the dedicated [GOV.UK](#) page. You may [contact Defra](#) to talk to advisors who have general information, based on the GOV.UK pages, to support traders. (Note that queries about applying for and invoicing for support attestations should be raised with APHA at [MAS\\_SAIvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_SAIvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on 0208 026 5644.)

## What are the benefits of MAS?

MAS is in place to support traders moving agri-food goods from GB to NI, from the end of the EU exit transition period until the end of December 2023 - protecting food security and recognising the importance of the agri-food industries. It will continue until the end of 2023 regardless of the outcome of current negotiations with the EU. MAS provides continuity of goods movement from GB to NI without traders incurring a significant increase in overall cost. Key benefits of MAS:

1. There is guidance for traders and certifiers on [GOV.UK](#) and further information for certifiers on [Vet Gateway](#). Questions about the process should be answered there.
2. You can [contact Defra](#) as a business or certifier for support on moving agri-food goods from GB to NI
3. There are reimbursements for certifiers of EHCs and PCs. EHCs are currently subject to a cap of up to £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs.
4. From February 2021, certain charges relating to COI costs were reimbursed to organic certifiers. The cap for COIs is currently set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: the caps only apply to the amount the Government will reimburse).
5. From April 2021, MAS reimbursed the cost of official certificates (including lab sampling) required for the movement of HRFNAO products listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#) and products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#)
6. From July 2021, the audit inspection cost of registering with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) was included within MAS, along with ongoing audit costs, bringing financial support to the exporting of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers from GB to NI.



7. From July 2021, MAS included costs related to testing sheep for scrapie as required for certification. The Government will reimburse up to £150 excl. VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie disease, as required as part of the export health certification.
8. From 1 August 2021, traders received financial support for the costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI. From 1 August 2021, the Government also supports businesses with meeting new costs for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB.
9. From 27 September 2021, traders who required support attestations (SA) to provide assurance to move agri-foods between GB-NI received financial support for some of the direct costs paid to official veterinarians or other certified professionals for checking and issuing the certification. Where there is a clear need for assurance indicated by a certifying officer for issuing an EHC, traders can claim up to £150 excluding VAT for each GB-NI declared SA. Only GB-NI declared SAs are eligible for reimbursement.
10. The scheme has been expanded from 1 April 2022 to bring the costs of Scrapie Qualifying Status (SQS) into the Scheme.

**The Government's recent Northern Ireland Command Paper stated there should be no certification required for goods moving GB to NI, so why are you reimbursing costs of certifications that support this process?**

While removing certification for goods moving from GB-NI is absolutely the Government's intention, the current standstill means that non-authorized traders will need to continue to certify their products.

**How does MAS differ from the Trader Support Service (TSS)?**

The MAS package of support has been developed by Defra to sit alongside Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) [Trader Support Service \(TSS\)](#). This has a wider remit to assist traders with customs procedures and processes. MAS supports traders moving agri-food commodities and live animals from GB to NI. MAS is a service specific to traders of agri-food. TSS supports the movement of all goods, whilst MAS serves only the movement of agri-food. The two services signpost each other via helplines.

**What is the reimbursement cap on Export Health Certificates (EHCs)?**

Reimbursements are currently subject to a reasonable cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse). Up to 31 March 2021, reasonable mileage expenses were reimbursed in line with HMRC's approved mileage rates. From 1 April 2001, mileage costs could not be claimed anymore; instead, certifiers can claim for time spent on travel. The time spent on travel forms part of the overall certification cost. The Government will also reimburse up to £150 excl. VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie disease, as required as part of the export health certification.

**What is the reimbursement cap for Certificates of Inspection for organic products?**

The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse)

**What is the reimbursement cap for support attestations?**

The current cap is set at £150 excl. VAT per Support Attestation. Traders can claim for time spent on travel, which is included in the overall certification cost cap.



**Are foreign traders entitled to reimbursement?**

Goods passing through GB to get to NI are not eligible. Agri-food goods moved from GB to NI are eligible for support through the MAS programme. If goods are opened, repacked, or tampered with in GB, they will be subject to the same requirements as goods starting their journey in GB to NI.

**My goods are not subject to the new requirements. Do I still need to engage with MAS?**

No. MAS is a support scheme for agri-food traders moving goods that require certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV), Local Authority (LA), The Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI) or other certifying officer such as an organic control body. If a trader's goods are not subject to new requirements under the NI Protocol, they do not have any requirement to engage with MAS.

**Do the new requirements apply to other traders moving goods to NI?**

This FAQ document addresses only questions for traders and certifiers who are moving agri-food commodities from GB to NI. The relevant authorities should be consulted on other areas of trade.

**Does it make a difference if my goods are for humanitarian, medical or diplomatic purposes?**

No. Any goods that need the relevant certifications are subject to the new requirements. MAS can support any trader moving such agri-food goods.

**Should I be engaging with other parties involved in the movement of goods on MAS?**

If traders are looking to have some of their applicable certifying costs reimbursed, or some of the cost of testing sheep for scrapie reimbursed, they must engage with a certifying officer who is registered on EHC Online or APHA (for plants and plant products). Note that if traders engage with a veterinarian who is not registered, the costs will be incurred by the trader and cannot be reimbursed. Traders of HRFNAO should engage with their LA in the first instance (regarding certification) and may need to provide evidence of the cost of lab sampling/analysis (the lab may provide the LA with this). Traders moving organic products from GB to NI should contact their organic control body. Traders with queries about PHEATS should visit the [PHEATS website](#) for contact details. Traders with queries about Scrapie Qualifying Status should contact Scotland's Rural College.

**Do the fees apply to traders only landing at ports?**

Agri-food goods moved from GB to NI are eligible for support through the MAS programme. Goods passing through GB to get to NI are not eligible. If goods are opened, repacked, or tampered with in GB, they will be subject to the same requirements as goods starting their journey in GB to NI.



### **What do traders need to do to apply for an EHC?**

Traders need to register on [EHC Online](#):

1. Traders need to fill in the online form for an EHC and include the details of where the goods are going
2. As part of the application, they need to select their certifier on EHC Online (If certifier details are unable to be found, the certifier will need to register online)
3. Trader and certifier agree to certification arrangements (time, date etc.)
4. Checks are carried out by the certifier
5. Assuming the checks are successful the certifier will provide the trader with the EHC

See also the section [Reimbursement of EHC Costs and Invoice Process](#).

### **What do traders of plants/plant products need to do to apply for a Phytosanitary Certificate (England and Wales)?**

1. Traders need to register on eDomero:
2. Traders should use eDomero to fill in the online form for a Phytosanitary certificate (PC), including the details of where the goods are going
3. As part of the application, they need to confirm if a sample of their products require inspecting. If so, traders will need to follow those instructions
4. Application will be reviewed by an APHA inspector
5. Assuming the checks are successful, the trader will be supplied with a PC

### **What do traders of organic products need to do to apply for a certificate of inspection (COI)?**

Traders should apply for the required checks needed for goods to travel from GB to NI in the usual way.

1. Traders of organic agri-food products should continue to use the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([Traces NT](#)) process to apply for COIs
2. Certifiers of COIs must be registered on Traces NT. Traders must contact the certifier (organic control body) to arrange the certification

See also the section [MAS Organics](#).

### **What do traders of HRFNAO need to do to apply for an official certificate?**

The high-level process below outlines the steps traders should continue to follow when moving HRFNAO from GB to NI. This process does not currently apply to Authorised Traders (supermarkets and their trusted suppliers). Authorised Traders can continue to move certain HRFNAO products from GB to NI without the need for official certification. Authorised Traders should continue to use [STAMNI compliance declaration form](#) to move these goods from GB to NI.

1. Trader logs onto [GOV.UK](#), downloads and completes Part 1 of the relevant official certificate
2. Trader sends a request to the LA for lab sampling and certification
3. LA sends a certifying officer to visit the site to take samples and send the samples to an official laboratory
4. Lab analyses samples and sends the results back to the certifying officer at the LA



5. Certifying officer completes Part 2 of the official certificate and provides a copy, returns the lab results, the report, and the completed official certificate to the trader
6. The LA sends an invoice to APHA for the reimbursement of lab sampling and official certificate costs
7. Trader sends copies of the official certificate and the lab results to the NI importer. Importer pre-notifies the arrival of the goods by completing Part 1 of a Common Health Entry Document ([CHED](#)) on the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([TRACES NT](#))
8. The original certificate and lab results must travel with the goods
9. On arrival in NI, goods will be subject to documentary checks, and ID and physical checks at the frequency set out in the legislation. The outcome of the checks is recorded on Part 2 of the CHED on TRACES

Visit [GOV.UK](#) for detailed guidance on the steps traders should follow, or view a HRFNAO process map [by clicking here](#).

See also the section [MAS for Certain Types of High-Risk Food and Feed of Non-Animal Origin \(HRFNAO\)](#).





# EHC Completion, Reimbursement and Invoice Process

## How is final destination defined within MAS?

To qualify for MAS financial support, the final destination of live animals or products must be Northern Ireland. The place of destination is defined as the 'establishment, or where relevant another place, where live animals or products are being delivered for 'final unloading' and to qualify for MAS financial support must remain in NI for a minimum period of 30 consecutive days, except in the case of equines. For equines that will be returning from NI to GB the minimum period the animal must remain in NI before returning to GB should be 48 consecutive hours.

## How do I clarify that NI is the final destination on the EHC?

When completing section 1.9 of the EHC (country of destination): Indicate the name (**must be Northern Ireland**) and ISO country code (XI) of Member State destination of the animals or products

When completing section 1.12 of the EHC (place of Destination): Indicate the name and address, country (**must be Northern Ireland**) and ISO country code (XI) of the place where the consignment is being delivered for final unloading. Where applicable, also indicate the registration or approval number of the establishment destination.

## Before I invoice the Government for the reimbursement of EHC certification costs, are there any steps that my business needs to follow?

Yes. Refer to [Vet Gateway](#) for the steps you will need to take before submitting invoices for reimbursement.

## When should I send in my invoice for work done?

Invoices must be submitted within 90 days. To help ensure EHC reimbursements are not unduly delayed, and to improve scheme turnaround times, a payment rule was introduced on 1 November 2021, limiting the time between EHC certification and invoicing to 90 days.

## How do I obtain a Purchase Order (PO) for an invoice?

- After your first EHC request, you will be contacted by APHA (via the email address registered in EHC Online for the EHC) with the details we need to set you up as a supplier
- You will then be provided with a Purchase Order (PO) number via email to the address in EHC Online, which you must include on your invoice. This may take up to 10 working days
- Queries regarding the PO number should be raised with APHA at: [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644

Further guidance on the reimbursement process is available on [Vet Gateway](#).



## **What do I need to include on my invoice for reimbursement by the Government?**

Unnecessary delays can be avoided if certifiers provide nine pieces of essential information. Getting invoices right means including the following:

1. Cost of checks based on existing fees up to £150 excluding VAT
2. Cost of laboratories processing samples and associated costs up to £34 excluding VAT
3. Travel time spent based on charge out rate. Please note that travel time can only be claimed for if it is not already included in your existing charge out rates. It can only be claimed on NI EHCs. This cost must be within the cap of £150 excluding VAT.
4. Date of certification completion. This should match the date in EHC Online and eTrade
5. Certifier ID
6. EHC serial number (if generated by EHC Online) or the certificate reference (if generated by eTrade).
7. VAT (at the appropriate rate) should be shown separately on the invoice as a separate charge
8. Unique invoice number
9. Practice details, registered trading name, address on letterhead and VAT registration number
10. PO number, as supplied by APHA team

Do not include hand-written amendments on an invoice or it will be returned. Note that it is not possible to submit invoices by post.

This list is also available on [Vet Gateway](#), which includes a [sample invoice](#)

### **Do I send one invoice per EHC?**

No. You should batch EHCs into a single invoice. Submit an invoice weekly or at least monthly.

### **Is there a limit to the amount of EHCs I can send in a single invoice?**

We ask that you restrict to sending up to 75 EHCs in a single invoice, to help ensure that we can reimburse within a suitable time.

### **Where do I send the invoice to?**

Invoices should be sent to [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk).

### **How long will it take for my invoice to be reimbursed?**

If all the required information is provided on the invoice, payments should be made into the bank account provided on your invoice, within 30 working days from submitting the invoice.

### **How will I know if my invoice has been accepted?**

Usual Government payment timelines apply. If there is an issue with your invoice, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your invoice, you can expect to receive payment into the bank account provided on your invoice, within 30 working days from submitting the invoice.

### **How will I know if my invoice has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to register on EHC Online. The email will explain why the invoice cannot be processed and if required, what additional information is needed.



**I am also dealing with EHCs to NI at the same time as EHCs to other destinations (such as the Republic of Ireland (ROI)). How should I allocate costs and what should I claim?**

You should only invoice for time spent on the NI EHCs (up to the cap, based on your existing charge out rates). For example:

- If you complete six EHCs over a six-hour period and the end destination for all EHCs is NI, and your standard charge out rate is £45 per hour, then a reimbursement claim for each EHC should be made for £45 each. From 1 April 2021 you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost
- If you complete six EHCs over a six-hour period, your time was equally spent across the six EHCs, and only two of those EHCs were for NI - using your standard charge out rate (e.g. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for two EHCs at £45 each. 2/6 of your travel time would be apportioned to these EHCs

It is important that you apportion your time accurately, only including the time spent on NI EHCs into your claim. We reserve the right to inspect records to validate claims. From 1 April 2021, you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost

- If you complete one EHC, and the end destination is NI, and it takes two hours to complete - using your standard charge out rate (eg. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for one EHC at £90. From 1 April 2021, you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost

**I certify for exporting and moving goods from GB-EU, GB-ROI and GB-NI. Can I be reimbursed for certifying from GB to EU, ROI and NI?**

No. The MAS scheme only covers movements from GB where the end destination is NI.

**Should I keep records of invoices and any supporting documentation?**

Yes. You should keep full and accurate records for a period of six years. Under the terms of the scheme, we retain the right to inspect records to validate claims.

**Is the MAS reimbursement and invoicing process the same for Local Authorities (LAs) and Official Veterinarians (OVs)?**

Yes. The invoicing process is the same for LAs and OVs.

**What is the reimbursement cap for EHC certification costs?**

Reimbursements will be subject to a reasonable cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse). From 1 April 2021, certifiers of EHCs can claim for time spent on travel within the total certification cost.

**Will there be changes to the reimbursement cap for certification costs?**

The Government continues to monitor the performance of MAS to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders. Defra will continue to communicate with certifiers on any changes that may impact them.

**Is there a specific reimbursement and invoicing process for plants?**



Yes. The process for plants is different because APHA are responsible for conducting these checks (unless you are enrolled in the PHEATS scheme). APHA will not invoice you for issuing a Phytosanitary Certification where the end destination is NI.

**Is there a specific reimbursement and invoicing process for equines?**

No. The process is the same. The only difference is that the certification cost cap for equines is set higher (£500) to reflect the additional costs incurred.

**If I have a problem with invoicing or the reimbursement process, who do I contact?**

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

**Will Defra answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?**

No. Our contact numbers are not able to answer any queries about reimbursement of certifier costs.

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.



## Certifiers of EHCs Claiming Time Spent on Travel

### **What date can I start to claim back time spent on travel?**

Before 1 April 2021 certifiers of EHCs could claim for travel based on mileage (and this charge was outside of the cap for EHCs). This changed on 1 April 2021. Now certifiers of EHCs may charge for the time spent on travel, based on their charge out rate. Note that the charge for travel time is now included within the cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs.

### **Why can certifiers no longer claim mileage?**

There has been a policy change following feedback from the certifier industry. To follow good industry practice, certifiers should claim for time spent on travel rather than miles travelled.

### **How do I work out time spent on travel?**

Certifiers should use their charge out rate for calculating time spent on travel.

### **How do I claim back time spent on travel?**

Certifiers should include time spent on travel on their invoice they submit to the Government for certification reimbursement. If you are claiming EHC costs refer to the [sample invoice](#) for more details on what to include on your invoice from 1 April 2021. Certifiers must include all the information detailed on the sample invoice to ensure payments are made promptly.

### **Do I have to create two invoices; one for certifying costs and a second for time spent on travel?**

No. Certifiers must submit all invoices as PDFs on preferably a monthly basis and include all EHCs that have been completed and any claim for time spent on travel.

### **Is the charge for time spent on travel included in the overall certification cost cap?**

Yes. From 1 April 2021, time spent on travel can be claimed as part of the overall certificate cost. No mileage can be claimed from this date onwards.

### **From 1 April 2021, will my invoice be rejected if I do not include time spent for travel?**

No. However, if time spent on travel is not included on the invoice, it is assumed that no travel time was required for the certificate and this is the reason for the omission.

### **Will there be further MAS policy changes that impact the reimbursement process?**

The Government continues to monitor the performance of MAS to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders. Defra will continue to communicate with certifiers on any changes that may impact them.



## Support attestation (SA) reimbursements

### **How will MAS help traders with the costs of SAs?**

From 27 September 2021, traders who require SAs to provide assurance to move agri-foods between GB-NI received financial support for some of the direct costs paid to Certifying Officers (either an Official Veterinarian (OV) or Food Competent Certifying Officer (FCCO)) or another registered vet for checking and issuing the certification.

### **How much can traders claim for SAs?**

Where there is a clear need for assurance indicated by an OV/FCCO for issuing an EHC, traders can claim up to £150 excluding VAT for each GB-NI declared SA. Only GB-NI declared SAs are eligible for reimbursement.

### **Can I be reimbursed for SAs produced for movements from GB to EU and/or ROI?**

No. The MAS scheme only covers GB-NI declared SAs for movements from GB to NI.

### **Will SAs produced in NI be eligible for reimbursement?**

Yes. As long as the SAs are produced in accordance with the guidance, used for supporting GB-NI trade and the required evidence is submitted with the application, then the SA is eligible for reimbursement.

### **Should I keep records of invoices and any supporting documentation?**

Yes. You should keep full and accurate records for a period of six years. Under the terms of the scheme, we retain the right to inspect records to validate claims.

### **If I have a problem with invoicing or the reimbursement process, who do I contact?**

Queries regarding application and the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [MAS\\_SAINVOICES@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_SAINVOICES@apha.gov.uk) or on 0208 026 5644.

### **Will Defra answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?**

We are not able to answer any queries about reimbursement of certification costs. Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [MAS\\_SAINVOICES@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_SAINVOICES@apha.gov.uk) or on 0208 026 5644.

### **What is the difference between a support attestation (SA) and a support health attestation (SHA)?**

Support attestation is the generic term used in this scheme to refer to a certificate created and used by a veterinarian or FCCO to support the export of agri-food goods. These are not official documents or export certificates. Support health attestations (SHA) refer to the certificates designed for slaughterhouses. SHAs are a type of SA.

### **The Government's recent Northern Ireland Command Paper stated there should be no certification required for goods moving GB to NI, so why are you reimbursing costs of certifications that support this process?**

While removing certification for goods moving from GB-NI is absolutely the Government's intention, the current standstill means that non-authorized traders will need to continue to certify their products, and as a result support attestations will continue to be required. Furthermore, there will likely remain a small group of potentially high-risk goods that will require certification for biosecurity reasons as part of any future outcome.



## Evidence requirements

### What is a unique SA number?

Each SA must be identified with a unique serial number to avoid the risk of duplication and assist traceability. It is recommended that the unique SA number includes an indication that the attestation is NI specific (eg includes the letter NI). For further guidance, please refer to the principles from the generic support health attestation document and guidance template ([ET199](#)), available via APHA's [Vet Gateway](#).

### Does the Certifying Officer need to verify whether the goods are destined for Northern Ireland at the point of signing the SA?

No. At the point that an SA is signed, no evidence is required that the products are intended for the Northern Ireland market (this may not be known). SAs which are marked as “**Valid for GB-NI trade use only**” must be used accordingly by Certifying Officers (ie these SAs cannot be used to support EU exports). SAs that are produced to support EU exports (ie without the restricted validity statement) can be used to support certification of products for Northern Ireland but these SAs are not eligible for reimbursement.

### What is the declaration that needs to be on the SA?

For the SA to be eligible for reimbursement, the SA must have the declaration “**Valid for GB-NI trade use only**” printed on the header of each page and certified by the OV or FCCO.

### How can I find evidence of a GB-NI EHC number linked to the goods covered by my SA?

You must speak to the exporter of the good to confirm a GB-NI EHC was created to support the movement of the good to Northern Ireland and to secure the EHC number. For the application to be approved, there must be a GB-NI EHC number provided, that links to the good covered by your SA.

## Reimbursement cap and costs

### What is the reimbursement cap for SA certification costs?

Reimbursements will be subject to a cap of £150 excl. VAT per support attestation. Traders can claim for time spent on travel, which is included in the overall certification cost cap.

### I require SAs for products traded between GB-NI. At the same time, SAs are also produced for products traded to other destinations (such as the Republic of Ireland (ROI)). How should I allocate costs and what should I claim?

You should only invoice for costs spent on producing GB-NI declared SAs (up to the cap). For example:

- If six SAs are completed over a six-hour period and all the SAs are declared “Valid for GB-NI trade use only”, and the OV/FCCO charge out rate is £45 per hour - then a reimbursement claim for each SA should be made for £45 each.
- If six SAs are completed over a six-hour period, the time was equally spent across the six SAs, and only two of those SAs were for declared “Valid for GB-NI trade use only” – using the OV/FCCO standard charge out rate (eg. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for two SAs at £45 each. We reserve the right to inspect records to validate claims.
- If you complete one SA, and it is declared “Valid for GB-NI trade use only”, and it takes two hours to complete—using the OV/FCCO’s standard charge out rate (eg. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for one SA at £90.



### **Can I claim for the reimbursement of travel time if this is included in the OV's or FCCO's invoice?**

Yes. Time spent on travel can be claimed for as part of the certification cost and should be outlined in the OV or FCCO invoice submitted to APHA as evidence for certification reimbursement. Note that the total reimbursement per support attestation, including the cost of travel time, will be subject to a cap of £150 excl. VAT.

### **Will there be changes to the reimbursement cap for certification costs?**

The Government continues to monitor the performance of MAS in general to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders. Defra will continue to communicate any changes to the scheme.

## **Application process**

### **I would like to claim SA costs. What do I need to include on my application for reimbursement by the Government?**

For details of what to include, see the application form on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and the process map included on the [GB-NI Trader Showcase](#).

### **Do I send one application per SA?**

No. You should batch multiple SAs into a single application. You should submit an application at least monthly.

### **Where do I send the application?**

Applications should be sent to [MAS\\_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk).

### **How long will it take for my application to be reviewed?**

If there is an issue with your application, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your application, you can expect an approval email between 10-15 working days.

### **How will I know if my application has been accepted?**

If all the required information is provided on the application, a decision on the application should be made within 10-15 working days from submitting the application.

### **How will I know if my application has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to send the application. The email will explain why the application cannot be processed, and if required, what additional information is needed.

## **Invoice process**

### **Before I invoice the UK Government for the reimbursement of certain certification costs, are there any steps that my business needs to follow?**

Yes. Only submit an invoice for payment when you have received confirmation that your application has been approved. Please refer to the sample invoice and process flowchart on the [GB-NI Trader Showcase](#) for the steps you will need to take before submitting invoices for reimbursement.

### **How do I obtain a Purchase Order (PO) for an invoice?**

After your first SA application, you will be contacted by APHA (via the email address on the application) with the details to register you as a trader. You will then be provided with a Purchase Order (PO) number via email, which you must include on your invoice. This may take up to 10 business days. Queries regarding the PO number should be raised with APHA at: [MAS\\_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on 0208 026 5644.





**Do I send one invoice per SA?**

No. You should batch all SA costs into a single invoice at least monthly. For details of what to include, refer to the sample invoice on the [GB-NI Trader Showcase](#).

**Where do I send the invoice?**

Invoices should be sent to [MAS\\_SAINvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_SAINvoices@apha.gov.uk).

**When should I submit my invoice?**

From 1 June 2022, invoices for SAs must be submitted within 90 days of confirmation that your application has been approved. However, traders receiving confirmation before 1 June 2022 have until 31 August 2022 to submit their invoice.

**How long will it take for my invoice to be reimbursed?**

If the application has been approved payment is made within 30 days of a fully verified correct invoice with all appropriate supporting documentation.

**How will I know if my invoice has been accepted?**

If there is an issue with your invoice, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your invoice payment is made within 30 days of a fully verified correct invoice with all appropriate supporting documentation.

**How will I know if my invoice has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to send the application. The email will explain why the invoice cannot be processed, and if required, what additional information is needed.



# Testing Sheep for Scrapie and Scrapie Qualifying Status

## **How does MAS expansion provide financial support to traders moving sheep from GB-NI?**

From 1 July 2021, traders moving sheep (GB-NI only) received support against the costs for scrapie genotype tests. The scheme has been expanded from 1 April 2022 to bring the costs of Scrapie Qualifying Status (SQS) into the Scheme. The costs include:

- Annual membership fee paid to SRUC (Scotland's Rural College), waived from 1 January 2022 (no fees have been taken since 1 January 2022)
- Cost of vet providing annual flock inspection (reimbursed to Official Veterinarian up to a cap of £150 excluding VAT)
- Costs associated with fallen stock (reimbursed in one payment to trader), including: scrapie testing of fallen stock, carcass collection, carcass disposal, up to £150 excluding VAT per animal.

## **How does the reimbursement process work when a trader DOES NOT have SQS status?**

When a trader does not have SQS a trader will not be charged for the costs of scrapie genotype tests where the stock is intended to move from GB-NI only. The laboratories processing the genotype samples will invoice the OV for the tests for stock intended to move from GB-NI. The OV will invoice the APHA finance team with the supporting documentation - the laboratory genotype results form and the EHC - demonstrating the trade movement. [A sample invoice is available here.](#)

## **Can an OV seek reimbursement for genotype tests for stock intended for NI where results point to an animal having scrapie?**

Yes. An OV can include the costs of the genotype tests for the intended movement of stock from GB-NI only, irrespective of the test results. This will be kept under review.

## **Are there additional costs associated with inspection of stock intended for the movement of GB-NI only for which an OV can seek reimbursement?**

Yes. An OV can claim up to £150 per inspection excluding VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie, as required as part of the EHC. OVs can include time spent on travel on an invoice within the cap of £150 excluding VAT, based on current charge out rates. Costs should reflect the OV's existing cost structure.

## **How does the reimbursement process work when a trader DOES have SQS status?**

Vets providing an annual flock inspection invoice the APHA finance team by emailing [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk). The invoice should include OV number and flock inspection number.

Traders seeking reimbursement for fallen stock (including scrapie testing, carcass collection and carcass disposal) up to a cap of £150 excluding VAT should also send an invoice to the APHA finance team by emailing [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk). The trader must provide proof of payment to the collector, showing that the amount covers scrapie testing, carcass collection and carcass disposal. [A sample invoice is available here.](#) We advise traders with queries about the scrapie scheme expansions



Department  
for Environment  
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to call their OV. Defra helplines are unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.



## Testing Uncastrated Rams for *Brucella Ovis*

### **How does this provide financial support to traders moving uncastrated rams from Great Britain – Northern Ireland?**

From 1 September 2022, MAS will cover the costs as follows:

- Costs relating to *Brucella ovis* testing in Northern Ireland (NI) prior to movement to Great Britain (GB) before returning to NI – flock owners will incur these costs and in turn be reimbursed by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) up to a cap of £150 (vet administration of testing) plus VAT and £34 plus VAT (cost of test).
- Costs relating to *Brucella ovis* testing in GB prior to movement to NI - the vet will not charge the flock owner but be reimbursed by APHA up to a cap of £150 (vet administration of testing) plus VAT and £34 plus VAT (cost of test).

Flock owners can claim for reimbursement for *Brucella ovis* testing by completing an application form and submitting to APHA.

Full details of this Scheme expansion and how to claim reimbursements are included in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document stored on the GB-NI Trader Showcase site.

### **How can I claim my money back?**

From 1 September 2022, the Scheme has been expanded to include the costs of *Brucella ovis* testing. Full details of this Scheme expansion and how to claim reimbursements are included in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document stored on the GB-NI Trader Showcase site.

### **Why is this only being considered now?**

We are constantly reviewing the scope of MAS to ensure that it meets the needs of traders and certifiers.

### **If I have been charged for this previously, will I be able to make a retroactive claim?**

Only costs incurred from 1 September 2022 onwards can be claimed under the MAS scheme.

### **Is this a new requirement by the EU?**

No. We are constantly reviewing the scope of MAS to ensure that it meets the needs of traders and certifiers.



## **PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) registration and ongoing audit**

### **How does PHEATS provide financial support to traders?**

From 1 July 2021, traders registered to PHEATS received defrayment of initial registration costs (£313) and subsequent audit costs (£172) where trade is to GB-NI only.

### **How does the defrayment process work?**

The initial registration and audit charges are waived by the APHA finance team, as well as the costs for issuance of the PC.

### **What happens if a trader moves goods outside of NI under PHEATS?**

Where goods are exported to a destination other than NI, charges will no longer be waived, and the trader will be invoiced by the APHA finance team.

Traders with queries about this expansion could also visit the [PHEATS website](#) for contact details.

Note that the Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.

## **International Seed Testing Association (ISTA) sample testing and certification**

### **How does MAS provide financial support for costs associated with the ISTA certification process?**

From 1 August 2021, traders requiring Orange International Certificates (OIC) for the movement of seeds GB-NI only are eligible to receive defrayment of costs.

### **How does the defrayment process work?**

Where movement is GB-NI only, the issuing bodies (either [NIAB](#) or [SASA](#)) waive the costs of the OIC to the trader. The issuing body invoices Defra for the reimbursement of the costs of certification for the seeds moving from GB-NI only. Note that the Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding issues on reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.

### **What happens if a trader moves goods outside of GB-NI?**

Where goods are detected to have a destination other than NI, the issuing body ([NIAB](#) or [SASA](#)) will invoice the trader for the charges of the OIC.



# MAS Organics

## General

### **Why have organic certificates of inspections (COIs) been included in MAS?**

Defra has listened to the industry and has responded to their request for the inclusion of some organic costs.

MAS initially focussed on GB-NI Export Health Certificate (EHC) and Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) requirements, which impacted the largest number of traders, to ensure an immediately smooth process for the largest percentage of agri-products moved into NI. We will continue to review and evolve MAS to ensure it best meets the needs of the market.

Organic certifications require separate marketing standards and certifications, which has made their inclusion more complex. Following supportive conversations with the organic control bodies, we are now able to include the costs of COI requirements for organic agri-food goods.

The Government will reimburse the cost of certification directly to the organic control bodies, ensuring the smooth movement of organic agri-food goods can continue from GB to NI.

### **What checks do you have in place to ensure that certification bodies are not simply expanding their operations and hiring staff not responsible for completing COIs?**

All reimbursement costs will be subject to review and audit. Defra also reserves the right to cap reimbursement costs up to what it considers are industry norms.

## Traders of Organic Products

### **I am a trader of organic products, what do I need to do?**

You should apply for the required checks needed for goods to travel from GB to NI in the usual way. You will not be charged for COI costs relating to organic agri-food products moving from GB to NI. Note that the cap for COIs is currently set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT

### **What is the certificate of inspection process I should follow?**

1. Traders of organic agri-food products should continue to use the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([Traces NT](#)) process to apply for COIs
2. Certifiers of COIs must be registered on Traces NT. Traders must contact the certifier (organic control body) to arrange the certification
3. An organic control body receives a trader request to provide a COI via Traces NT
4. The control body completes the request, checking the terms of the license and ensuring there are no suspensions
5. The control body prints, signs and stamps the COI to endorse the request and uploads back to Traces NT
6. The control body sends the original COI to the trader to allow the movement of products to take place



### **What funds are available?**

Certain charges relating to the COI costs will be reimbursed to organic certifiers. We have engaged with each of the organic certifying bodies directly to agree terms. The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse).

From 1 August 2021, the Government also reimburses traders for the licencing component of registration with their organic control body where they move goods solely GB to NI. This includes the importer/exporter licencing component of organic registration costs faced by exporters operating out of GB who move organics solely to NI and now must license as such, and importers in NI who face new costs to license as an importer to receive these goods from GB, provided that the registering control body is UK based.

Traders moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their organic control body for advice.

Note that the Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.

### **How does the process work for the licencing component of registration?**

The new costs faced by exporters/importers will be paid by traders and reimbursed by the Government, once traders have demonstrated that they have only imported/exported NI-GB or vice versa, at the end of that licencing period.

You will need to complete an application form, including payment information and declaration that movements have been solely between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This form will be returned to your control body to confirm registration and on to DEFRA who, will audit imports/exports to ensure eligibility and return a PO. This will then allow the trader to directly invoice Defra.

Please contact your organic control body to obtain an application form.

### **Will there be any further MAS policy changes?**

The MAS scheme will be regularly reviewed to ensure outcomes reflect policy intentions.

### **How long will the Government cover these costs?**

MAS has been extended to the end of December 2023, at which point the scheme will close. It is constantly monitored and assessed to see how the scheme is working. Defra will continue to review the requirements of both traders and certifiers. This approach means we can monitor how things are operating in order to ensure that we provide people in NI with access to the food they currently enjoy.



## Organic Control Bodies

### **What is the process I should follow for a consolidated certificate of inspection (COI) reimbursement?**

Below is a summary of the steps that both the trader and control body are required to follow for the reimbursement of COIs from Defra:

1. Trader applies for the COI from the organic control body; specifying what route the COI will take
2. The control body receives the request through TRACES NT
3. The control body creates the COI for movement of products from GB to NI only
4. The control body records certification details and provides organisation information as evidence for invoicing. The information will be used to validate the COI is for moving goods between GB to NI only
5. The control body sends Defra a monthly invoice, including details of all GB to NI COIs produced within the time period (capped at £25 ex. VAT and £30 incl. VAT. This cap applies to what the Government will reimburse)
6. Defra completes checks on the invoice to ensure goods are moving on the GB-NI route, approves the invoice and the Defra team reimburses the control body

### **How long will reimbursement take to process?**

The payment to an organics control body will be repaid in a timely fashion. Payments should be made within 10 working days but may take up to 30 working days. Note that the Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.

### **Are there any pre-requisites I need to complete to ensure a successful reimbursement process?**

The control body may be required to supply organisation details to be set-up as a supplier, this will be a one-time set-up.

### **Is there a maximum number of COIs that can be submitted during a period?**

No. There is no limit, but control bodies should ensure all COIs submitted are for products moving from GB to NI only.

### **How will I know what information to include on the invoice?**

The invoice should include details of all COIs completed for the GB-NI route for the period since the last invoice was sent and a purchase order number will be provided to be included on the invoice.

### **How will I know if any additional information is required on the invoice?**

Defra will email you if any additional information is required before a reimbursement can be granted.

### **If our account details change who should we contact?**

Please email Defra at [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk) to make any amendments to your supplier details. This should be in advance of submitting an invoice.

### **If we are having any issues with submitting our invoice who should we contact?**

Please email Defra if you have any issues submitting an invoice at: [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk)





### **What is the deadline to submit the invoice for the period?**

The deadline to submit the invoice for the period, is the last working day of the third week of the month. E.g. For April, all invoices should be sent to Defra by 23 April. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by Defra in advance.

### **How long until we will receive the reimbursed payment?**

Current payment terms are set at 30 working days. Reimbursement of costs will be provided within this timeframe. Defra will always endeavour to provide payment in advance of this deadline. Any unforeseen issues with this will be communicated by Defra.

### **Where will the reimbursed funds go?**

Defra will reimburse funds to the account details provided during the initial supply set-up. If these details change, it will be the control bodies responsibility to request these are updated.

### **What if we make a mistake on the invoice, who should we contact to make the amendments?**

Please email Defra if you identify an error on the invoice submitted at: [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk)

This should be accompanied by an amended version of the invoice. If the invoice has already been submitted and processed the over/or under payment will be applied to the following months invoice.

### **What if we create COIs on the day of the deadline?**

COIs created on the day of the deadline should fall into the next month's invoice.

### **What will be reimbursed for a COI?**

The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT. This cap applies to what the Government will reimburse.

### **When can COIs be reimbursed from?**

COIs completed from the 1 February 2001 can be covered by the scheme.

### **Who should I contact for invoice queries?**

Please email APHA at [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk).

Note that the Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.



# MAS for Certain Types of High-Risk Food and Feed of Non-Animal Origin (HRFNAO)

## General

### What are high risk foods and feed of non-animal origin?

Some foods of non-animal origin are considered high-risk foods and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) because they pose health risks associated with the country of origin. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) are the Competent Authority for these products, and Local Authorities (LAs) are local certifiers.

For more information visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and [FSA](https://www.food.gov.uk) websites. Traders moving HRFNAO can also contact their Local Authority for guidance.

### Why are HRFNAO in scope?

MAS is constantly monitored and assessed to see how the scheme is working. The scheme has been extended to include HRFNAO following a recent review. We will continue to review the requirements of both traders and certifiers. This approach means we can monitor how things are operating in order to determine how best to provide ongoing support.

### What HRNAO products fall under the MAS extension?

1. Products listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#)
2. Products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#) - those at risk due to radioactive elements following the Chernobyl accident

### Why has the MAS scheme been extended to cover these products?

All other HRFNAO products (namely, those that fall under Annex 1 of Regulation 2019/1793) do not require official certification or lab sampling prior to movement from GB to NI, therefore no certification costs will be incurred.

### What is the process to get an official certificate and laboratory analysis report?

A detailed breakdown of the steps the certifier and trader needs to take can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

### When will the Government start paying for certain HRNAO official certificates and laboratory analysis reports?

From 1 April 2021, LAs invoice the Government for these costs.



### **What funds are available?**

The Government will reimburse the cost of certification and lab sampling, against the size of the consignment, directly to the LA. The LA must provide a cost breakdown to support their claims. In some instances, more clarification may be requested before any reimbursement is paid.

### **Will the reimbursement cap limit be reviewed?**

There will be a regular review cycle where a reimbursement cap limit may be set at a future date, based on data received

### **How long will the UK Government cover these costs?**

Following its successful launch and recent review, MAS will continue to support traders until the scheme closes at the end of December 2023. The Government will continue to monitor the performance of the scheme, to determine how best to provide ongoing support to traders.

### **The process for moving HRFNAO from GB to NI is currently manual; will this process change in the future?**

The process for moving HRFNAO from GB to NI is not currently changing, however the Government is exploring options on how to best provide ongoing support to traders.

## **Traders of HRFNAO**

### **What is the process for traders moving HRFNAO from GB to NI?**

The high-level process below outlines the steps traders should continue to follow when moving HRFNAO from GB to NI. This process does not currently apply to Authorised Traders (supermarkets and their trusted suppliers). Authorised Traders can continue to move certain HRFNAO products from GB to NI without the need for official certification. Authorised Traders should continue to use STAMNI compliance declarations forms to move these goods from GB to NI.

- Trader logs onto [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), downloads and completes Part 1 of the relevant official certificate
- Trader sends a request to the LA for lab sampling and certification
- LA sends a certifying officer to visit the site to take samples and send the samples to an official laboratory
- Lab analyses samples and sends the results back to the certifying officer at the LA
- Certifying officer completes Part 2 of the official certificate and provides a copy, returns the lab results, the report, and the completed official certificate to the trader
- The LA sends an invoice to APHA for the reimbursement of lab sampling and official certificate costs
- Trader sends copies of the official certificate and the lab results to the NI importer. Importer pre-notifies the arrival of the goods by completing Part 1 of a Common Health Entry Document ([CHED](#)) on the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([TRACES NT](#))
- The original certificate and lab results must travel with the goods
- On arrival in NI, goods will be subject to documentary checks, and ID and physical checks at the frequency set out in the legislation. The outcome of the checks is recorded on Part 2 of the CHED on TRACES

Visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for guidance on the steps traders should follow or view a HRFNAO process map [here](#).



**Who do I contact if I am incorrectly charged for official certification costs for the HRFNAO in-scope of MAS?**

LAs should invoice the Government for official certification costs from the 1 April 2021.

Traders should not be charged for official certificates that have a certification date of 1 April 2021 onwards. Traders should contact their LA to resolve. The Defra helpline team is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice that is submitted by the LA will dictate whether the LA will claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government or trader.

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 1 April 2021 and submits the invoice from 1 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs



## Certifiers of HRFNAO

### What process should LAs follow for the reimbursement of official certificates for certain HRFNAO?

The process for certification of HRFNAO products from GB to NI does not change.

The high-level process below outlines the steps LAs should follow for the reimbursement of official certification costs.

- When a LA receives a request from a trader to inspect HRFNAO goods, they should conduct that assessment as usual
- When the request is received, the LA should, for first time only:
  - Contact APHA to notify them at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk)  
This will allow the APHA to conduct checks to see if the LA has been set up as a supplier for payment to be made later
  - The LA must supply APHA with evidence that they have received an application from a trader to move HRFNAO to NI
  - If they have been set up as a supplier, they will be provided with a unique Purchase Order (PO) number, which should be used on all invoices
  - If they have not been set up as a supplier APHA will contact the LA and request details to be provided to get them set up as a supplier, they will also then be provided with a PO number. To help speed up this process, LAs should complete and return the [Information for Supplier Set-Up form](#) as soon as possible
- Checks on the HRFNAO goods are carried out as usual and certification provided to the trader
- Each month the LA should generate an invoice and submit a PDF version to APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk). This should be for all GB-NI HRFNAO checks they have completed that fall in-scope of MAS
- As part of the information they submit, they will need to provide the following details:
  - PO number provided by APHA
  - Certificate unique reference number
  - Copy of the certificate - including date processed and destination of goods
  - Breakdown of costs - charge out rates, time spent on travel and lab costs
  - Receipt or evidence of lab sampling costs (including a copy of the invoice if not in-house lab costs)
- The invoice/s will then be processed by APHA and checks carried out, with any clarifications sent back to the LA if required
- If all details are supplied correctly and all enquiries have been resolved, payment should be made within 30 days.



**How do I obtain a Purchase Order (PO) for an invoice?**

After your first HRFNAO official certification request, you should contact APHA with the details required to set you up as a supplier at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk).

The information shown in the '[Information Required for Supplier Set-Up](#)' table below is needed to set up all LAs. To help speed up the process, please use the information contained in the table, add this to your **Local Authority letter-headed document** and return as a PDF to the email address above as soon as possible.

In addition, please provide the trader email with the application request as this is the evidence trail to demonstrate the requirements of the certification work.

Once you are set up as a supplier you will be notified of your unique Purchase Order number and further instructions regarding invoicing for reimbursement.

Information Required for Supplier Set-Up	
Local Authority name:	
Site address:	
Tel. no:	
Is payment address the same as site address? If not please provide:	Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
Remittance email address:	
Primary email address:	
Payment method:	BACS
Account name:	
Account number:	
Sort code:	
Roll number:	
Bank name:	
Duns number (if registered):	
VAT registration number:	



### **What do I need to include on my invoice for reimbursement by the Government?**

Please see [sample invoice](#) for the details required on each invoice from 1 April 2021.

Please PDF the invoice and provide evidence supporting the claim, including the certification and lab costs for sampling (including copy of invoice if not in-house lab costs).

### **When should I start submitting invoices for reimbursement of certain HRFNAO official costs to the Government?**

From 1 April 2021, LAs invoice the Government for these costs.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice that is submitted by the LA will dictate whether the LA will claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government or trader. For example:

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021 and invoice is submitted on 31 March 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 1 April 2021 and the invoice is submitted from 1 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs

### **How often should I submit an invoice.**

You should submit an invoice for each certification. Please refer to the [sample invoice](#) for details of what to include on the invoice from 1 April 2021. You must send a PDF version of the invoice and include evidence that supports the invoice i.e. the certification, the lab costs for sampling (including copy invoice if not in-house lab costs).

### **Where do I send the invoice to?**

Invoices should be sent to [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk).

### **How long will it take for my invoice to be reimbursed?**

If all the required information is provided on the invoice, payments should be made into the bank account provided on your invoice, within 30 working days from submitting the invoice.

### **How will I know if my invoice has been accepted?**

Usual Government payment timelines apply. If there is an issue with your invoice, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your invoice, you can expect to receive payment into the bank account provided on your invoice 30 working days from submitting the invoice.



**How will I know if my invoice has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to register as a supplier. The email will explain why the invoice cannot be processed and if required, what additional information is needed. We may also telephone if the rejection is because the amount claimed appears excessive.

**I am also dealing with certifications to NI at the same time as certifications to other destinations (such as the Republic of Ireland (ROI)). How should I allocate costs and what should I claim?**

You should only invoice for time spent on the NI certification (based on your existing charge out rates). Where time is incurred across consignments going to both NI and non-NI destinations (e.g. ROI), then the costs should be proportionally allocated.

**I certify for exporting and moving goods from GB-EU, GB-ROI and GB-NI. Can I be reimbursed for certifying from GB to EU, ROI and NI?**

No. The MAS scheme only covers movements from GB where the end destination is NI.

**Should I keep records of invoices and any supporting documentation?**

Yes. You should keep full and accurate records for a period of six years. Under the terms of the scheme, we retain the right to inspect records to validate claims.

**If I have a problem with invoicing or the reimbursement process, who do I contact?**

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

**Will Defra answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?**

The Defra helpline team is not able to answer any queries about reimbursement of certifier costs.

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.





## Accessibility

### **I don't have access to the internet—how can I access MAS?**

You can [contact Defra](#) if you are not able to access GOV.UK. (Note that queries about applying for and invoicing for support attestations should be raised with APHA at [MAS\\_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:MAS_Sainvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on 0208 026 5644.)

### **Is MAS accessible?**

All Government resources are designed to be as accessible and to enable as many people as possible to use them.

### **Is MAS support available in other languages?**

Customers will be able to ask for a Welsh speaking representative on the helpline if preferred.

### **Will the online information service be easy to use and access?**

Our aim to provide a service that is easy to access and use. We believe the information available on [GOV.UK](#), supported by the helpline, provides an efficient and easy-to-use service.

### **Do I need a Government Gateway account as I don't have an account?**

EHC Online allows you to request certification and invoice for the reimbursement of costs for EHCs. If you do not already have one, you will need to register for a Government Gateway account to access [EHC Online](#).

## Helplines

### **What if I need more support?**

If you have read the information on [GOV.UK](#) and still require further general information on moving goods from GB to NI, [contact Defra](#). Defra helplines are unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases. Traders moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their organic control body for advice. Traders moving HRFNAO can also contact their Local Authority for guidance. Traders with queries about PHETAS could also visit the [PHEATS website](#) for contact details.

### **What can the helplines support me with?**

Call agents can provide guidance based on the information on the GOV.UK pages and provide support for goods that require certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV), Local Authority (LA), Plant Health and Seed Inspectors (PHSI), and other Certifying Officers.

Traders moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their organic control body for advice. Traders moving HRFNAO can also contact their Local Authority for guidance. Traders with queries about PHEATS could also visit the [PHEATS website](#) for contact details.



### **Why did the MAS Helpline close on 1 April 2022?**

The helpline number closed on 1 April 2022 so we can provide a more efficiently run service. Call numbers to the helpline were very low. For instance, in December 2021, it only dealt with one per cent of calls related to GB-NI movements. Most traders and certifiers have been contacting Defra using one of our other numbers. It therefore made sense to close the MAS Helpline. For help and advice from the teams answering MAS and GB-NI trade questions, [please use one of these numbers to contact the appropriate Defra department](#).

## **Security**

### **I am concerned about privacy/commercial confidentiality. Can you confirm all the required security measures are in place?**

GOV.UK is provided by the Government Digital Service (GDS), part of the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office is the data controller for pages starting with **www.gov.uk** - for example, [www.gov.uk/pip](http://www.gov.uk/pip). If you follow a link to a service provided by another Government department, agency or local authority that organisation will:

- be the data controller
- be responsible for processing any data you share with them
- publish and manage their own [privacy notice](#) with details of how to contact them

### **How will you guarantee payment data is secure?**

We are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We have set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure of your data - for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption. We also make sure that any third parties that we deal with keep all personal data they process on our behalf secure.

### **What level of encryption / security is in place?**

We are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We have set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure of your data - for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption. We also make sure that any third parties that we deal with keep all personal data they process on our behalf secure.



## Misuse/Abuse

### **What happens if I attempt to trade without the certification required?**

Traders without the relevant certifications will not be able to move goods to NI.

### **Is this a chance for opportunistic certifiers to charge more money for certifications than they did prior to MAS?**

Reimbursement costs will be capped to ensure claims fall within usual limits.

### **Is MAS compliant with GDPR and other EU regulations?**

We design, build and run our systems to make sure that your data is as safe as possible at all stages, both while it's processed and when it's stored. We collect information through Google Analytics to see how you use the site and Government digital services. All personal data is stored in the European Economic Area (EEA). Data collected by Google Analytics may be transferred outside the EEA for processing.

## Fairness/Equality

### **Will hauliers be reimbursed for time?**

Hauliers are not impacted by MAS, which is set up to provide specific support to traders and certifiers.

### **Is there a risk that certifiers will select the higher paid jobs, and small businesses will find it difficult to get certified?**

MAS cannot influence how certifiers manage workloads. We have set a threshold/cap for reimbursement of costs, which we believe is a fair approach for all.