



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 12/21

Movement Assistance Scheme - Further Extensions Announced

Date issued: 6 April 2021

Purpose

To update Local Authorities (LAs) on the [Movement Assistance Scheme](#) extensions that came into effect from **1 April 2021**.

Background

The Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS) was launched in December 2020 to support traders and certifiers. The Movement Assistance Scheme means traders do not need to pay certain certification costs for moving agri-food goods, with the costs incurred by those certifying the products, reimbursed by government up to a set amount. The scheme also includes a dedicated helpline for general enquiries for moving agri-foods from GB to NI.

Action

Defra has announced today two further extensions to the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS) that will help support traders and certifiers moving agri-food products from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI).

Scheme Extension

Following a successful launch and recent review, certifiers can continue to claim from the Government some of the direct costs for checking and issuing certain certificates for agri-foods moving from GB-NI.

The Government continues to monitor the scheme and will review it again in three months' time, to determine how best to provide ongoing support to traders.

Scheme Expanded to Include Certain High-Risk Foods and Feed of Non-Animal Origin

From 1 April 2021, traders of the following high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) products do not need to pay official certification costs (including lab sampling costs):

1. Products listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#)¹ (examples incl. but not limited to: nuts, dried spices and dried fruits)
2. Products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#)—those at risk due to radioactive elements following the Chernobyl accident (examples incl. but not limited to: mushrooms, wild berries and other wild fruits)

The official certification costs for the HRFNAO products listed will be incurred by LAs. LAs should invoice the Government for these costs.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice will dictate whether the LA is able to claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government.

For example:

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 6 April, 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 and the invoice is submitted from 6 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs

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.

MAS Reimbursement Process for Official Certificates

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. This will allow APHA to conduct checks to see if the LA has been set up as a supplier for payment to be made later

¹ Annex 1 of regulation 2019/1793 goods are not covered by MAS as these goods are not subject to certification of lab sampling requirements. Traders therefore do not incur a cost for these elements.

- 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 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. 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 10-15 days

Refer to the [frequently asked questions](#) for further details on the reimbursement process for official certification costs.

Supporting Certifiers

The following resources provide further information on the expansion of MAS, which now includes certain HRFNAO products:

1. [Frequently Asked Questions](#): are designed to answer questions on the extension of MAS, which now includes certain HRFNAO products and the process for claiming official certification costs
2. [Sample Invoice](#): details what certifiers should include on invoices when claiming official certification costs for certain HRGNAO products from 1 April 2021

1. Frequently Asked Questions

1.1 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 websites](#).

1.2 Movement Assistance Scheme

Why has MAS been set up?

Defra are supporting traders who move agri-food commodities (including but not limited to: live animals, products of animal origin, plants and plant products, organic products and certain HRFNAO between Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI). This support is available through the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).

MAS currently:

- **advises traders and certifiers** on new requirements
- **provides financial support** by reimbursing some of the direct costs of the new measures under the NI Protocol

Through MAS, Defra are 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 transition period. It provides traders with assistance with understanding the new regulations for those moving goods from GB to NI. Second, MAS reimburses some of the direct certification costs that would be incurred by traders for agri-food commodities and equines under the new requirements.

Certifiers of agri-foods moving from GB-NI that require certification can receive financial support for some of the direct costs of checking and issuing certain Export Health Certificates (EHCs), Phytosanitary Certificates (PCs), Certificates of Inspection (COIs) and PHEATS—up to a certain amount.

Following a period of review MAS now also reimburses 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](#).

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. If a business is moving certain agri-foods (including but not limited to: live animals, plants and plant products, organic products and certain HRFNAO products) that require certification, the costs charged by the certifier will be reimbursed by the Movement Assistance Scheme—rather than paid for by the trader.

Why are certain HRFNAO products coming into scope now?

MAS is constantly monitored and assessed to see how the scheme is working. The scheme has been extended to include certain HRFNAO products 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 HRFNAO 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 only 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.

When will the Government start paying for official certificates and laboratory analysis report?

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

What if I submit an invoice to the Government before 1 April for the reimbursement of official certification costs for HRFNAO products?

LAs can only invoice the Government for HRFNAO certification costs if the date certified on the invoice is for the 1 April onwards. Any invoices that are submitted with the date certified pre 1 April 2021, will be rejected by APHA.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice will dictate whether the LA is able to claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government.

For example:

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 6 April, 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 and the invoice is submitted from 6 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification 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 there be a reimbursement cap?

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 Government cover these costs?

Following a successful launch and recent review, certifiers can continue to claim from the Government some of the direct costs for checking and issuing certain certificates for agri-foods moving from GB-NI. The Government continues to monitor the scheme and will review it again in three months' time, 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.

1.2 Reimbursement of certain HRFNAO official certification costs and invoice process

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

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.

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 PO 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:	<i>Yes/No (delete as appropriate)</i>
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.

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).

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

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 10—15 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, between 10—15 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 or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

Will the MAS helpline answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?

The MAS contact helpline 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 or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

2. Sample Invoice - For use from 1 April 2021

Invoice to: Animal & Plant Health Agency

Send to: ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk

XXXX Local Authority

Invoice date: 2 Apr 2021

Invoice number: INV-xxxx

Purchase order number: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Certifier Id: 666

Site Attended:

XX1 2BB to XX7 7YY

Date Certified	Unique reference for certification	Time spent	Charge out rate/hour	Net cost of checks	VAT	Total
01/04/2021	Xxbb01-05-21	9hr	£52	£468	£93.60	£561.60
01/04/2021	Laboratory test-actual cost (see attached invoice from supplier)	n/a	£170	£170	£34	£204
01/04/2021	TOTAL CLAIM FOR CERTIFICATION COSTS					£765.60

Total invoice	£638	£127.60	£765.60
----------------------	-------------	----------------	----------------

Bank Details: BACS Payment to Bank name, Account No: xxxxxxxx Sort Code: xx-xx-xx
Registered Office: XXXX Local Authority, Council Road, Council Town XXX XXX