



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 12/24

Official Veterinarians must cease using their own versions of Export Health Certificates

Date issued: 25 March 2024

Purpose

To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) located in Great Britain (GB) that it is not acceptable for any OVs to issue a version of an Export Health Certificate (EHC) obtained from a source other than direct from EHC online. This includes EHC templates that contain pre-deleted health conditions.

Background

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) have been made aware that some companies or individuals are offering a service whereby EHCs are available to download with the health conditions options in the EHC pre-deleted.

Another scenario is that some OV Practices hold their own templates for some EHCs with the 'delete as appropriate' options already scored through.

It appears that whilst the exporter makes an application through the EHC Online service, once the EHC is made available to the OV; the unique serial number and details in Part I of the EHC are copied across to the external system which then provides a certificate with the deletions ready-made.

In other circumstances Part I of the EHC from EHC Online service is used, but a template stored by the practice already showing the deletions is used to produce Part II of the EHC.

These processes are NOT acceptable and must not be used.

Action for OV Practices to Cease Use of Unofficial EHC Templates

1. There are too many risks associated with these processes, such as the incorrect template being selected, or an old version of the EHC being used, the deletable options changing due to a case of notifiable disease and not being picked up by the OV, as well as potential conflict with the principles of certification.
2. Only certificates provided by the Competent Authority must be used. We must demonstrate to trading partners that the Competent Authority has control over certificates that are issued and OVs must not use alternative systems for issuing EHCs, which undermine this.
3. APHA will take action against any OVs who use an alternative system or process. In addition, should an EHC template be used that was not provided by APHA/Defra, which results in refusal of entry by the Border Control Post (BCP) or any other complaints, APHA may not be able to assist in resolving the issues as the EHC used was not issued officially through the EHC Online service.
4. It is permissible for deletions to be made electronically on the EHC downloaded by the OV from the EHC Online service, but no other template EHC must be used.
5. It is appreciated that with some EHCs, large sections of the EHC are not relevant for consignments leaving GB and are always deleted. However, APHA and Defra are looking into ways to address this and make the certificates simpler for OVs to use.

Further Information

CITC Email: exports@apha.gov.uk

CITC Telephone: 0300 0300 201

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