



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

## APHA Briefing Note 16/20

# Export Health Certificate Printing on Plain White Paper during the Coronavirus Restrictions with Appendix update

**Date issued: 24 April - updated 13 May, 15 May, 20 May, 27 May, 29 May, 17 June, 24 June, 29 June, 6 August 2020, 26 August, and 16 September 2020**

### Purpose

1. To inform Certifying Officers (Official Veterinarians (OVs) and Environmental Health Officers (EHO)) located in England, Scotland and Wales of temporary measures being introduced to enable Export Health Certificates (EHC) for certain Third Countries to be printed on plain white paper and provide an update on this Briefing Note issued on 24 April 2020.

### Background

2. EHCs for the United Kingdom to Third Countries are normally issued using Crown Vellum Watermarked security paper to provide anti-fraud assurance to Importing Competent Authorities of the authenticity of UK certification.
3. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, changes to notification procedures for the export of live animals and animal products are being negotiated with key importing countries in order to support continuity of trade. These measures are needed to take account of reduced availability of officials, temporary closure of Government offices and disruption to courier and logistics services.
4. Defra have agreed with a number of Third Country Competent Authorities for the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to produce EHCs on plain white paper as a temporary measure to assist both APHA in issuing EHCs and to facilitate certification procedures of export services. These procedures are only a temporary measure during the coronavirus restrictions, will only apply to EHCs where

negotiations with Third Country Competent Authorities have been successful and will revert to business as usual procedures when it is possible to do so without restricting export trade.

5. Agreement to produce EHCs on plain white paper has now been reached with the People's Republic of China. APHA commenced issuing EHCs for Certifying Officers to print on plain white paper from Wednesday 13 May 2020.
6. The list of Third Countries that have agreed to the use of EHCs on plain white paper can be found in the [Appendix](#) with the current agreement dates annotated.

## Temporary Procedures during the Coronavirus Restrictions for the People's Republic of China

7. The following requirements associated to the use of plain white paper EHCs for the People's Republic of China have been negotiated by Defra.
8. APHA will issue the EHC to the Certifying Officer by email.
9. The Certifying Officer must print the EHC on plain white paper. If the EHC consists of multiple pieces of paper, Certifying Officers must adhere to APHA's guidance on fan stamping EHCs which is available on the [APHA Vet Gateway](#).
10. After completing inspection/examination of the export consignment and certification procedures to complete the plain white paper EHC, the Certifying Officer must scan and email a copy of the EHC to the Exporter and APHA and retain a copy for their own records.
11. The original wet signed copy of the EHC must be given to the exporter and must accompany the consignment to the People's Republic of China.
12. The only change to the existing certification procedures for the People's Republic of China is to produce EHCs on plain white paper instead of Crown Vellum Watermarked security paper during the Coronavirus pandemic.
13. The scanned copy of the EHC must be emailed to APHA on **the same day of signature** to enable APHA to upload the EHC to the General Administration of Customs China (GACC) eCert database. Any delay in returning scanned emailed EHCs to APHA could result in consignments being held at the Border Control Point/Entry Point.
14. The email to APHA should contain the following details in the subject line of the email: White Paper – China – EHC serial number. This will enable APHA to promptly identify plain white paper EHCs for the People's Republic of China that require uploading to the GACC eCert database.
15. APHA will also respond to any correspondence from the People's Republic of China if any queries are received as to the authenticity of a white paper EHC. APHA

may contact Certifying Officers to complete authenticity checks should the need arise.

## Additional Requirement for Australia

16. An additional requirement has now been included for export consignment being dispatched to Australia where the EHC is issued on plain white paper. With immediate effect, the original wet signed copy of the EHC must be given to the exporter and must accompany the consignment to the Australia.

## Further Information

- Certification guidance can be found in the Exports guidance on the [APHA Vet Gateway](#)
- Specific guidance regarding fan stamping of EHCs can be found in the Exports guidance Certification Procedures page of the [APHA Vet Gateway](#)
- Any queries relating to these temporary procedures should be sent to: [exports@apha.gov.uk](mailto:exports@apha.gov.uk)

**Issued:** 29 May 2020

## Appendix

The list of Third Countries that have agreed to the use of EHCs on plain white paper and the current agreement dates are:

- Australia – Agreed until 1 October 2020
- Gibraltar – Agreed until further notice
- People's Republic of China – Agreed until 31 December 2020
- USA – Agreed until 30 September 2020 for live animal exports, and agreed until further notice for products of animal origin
- Myanmar – Agreed until further notice
- Philippines – Agreed until further notice
- Hong Kong – Agreed until further notice
- United Arab Emirates – Agreed until further notice
- North Macedonia – Agreed until further notice
- Canada – Agreed until further notice
- New Zealand – Agreed until further notice