



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

## **APHA Briefing Note 41/20**

# **Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS), to support traders and businesses in meeting new requirements for moving animals, plants and associated products from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI) after the transition period ends**

**Date issued: 16 December 2020**

### **Purpose**

To inform certifiers of animals and products of animal origin of the need to register with EHC Online before 1 January 2021, and to detail how they can be reimbursed of some certification costs through the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).

### **Background**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has introduced the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS), to support traders and businesses in meeting new requirements for moving animals, plants and associated products from Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI) after the transition period ends.

This will include advice to businesses through a helpline, and the reimbursement of some certification costs associated with the new requirements. Together, these measures will support traders as they continue to move agri-food goods from GB to NI.

### **Action**

Whether you're a current certifier – or would like to become one – you'll now need to register with Export Health Certificate Online (EHC Online).

This is the service certifiers and traders will use to apply for, and manage, their certificates.

We recommend you read through the guidance documents available on the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) [Vet Gateway](#) website before you register, to follow the steps appropriate for your organisation.

Registering with EHC Online means you'll be in the best place possible for the upcoming changes and be able to benefit from the expected extra business from traders.

Once registered, you'll be able to receive applications from clients, manage your certificate caseload, print them for signing and stamping after inspecting goods, and notify APHA of the outcome.

If you already have an EHC Online account you do not need to register again, your current one will be fine.

## Getting started and carrying out checks (GB/NI only)

- Register on EHC Online.
- You'll be notified of new certification requests on EHC Online.
- After your first request you'll be contacted by APHA with details of how to receive payment.
- You'll then be provided with a purchase order number via email, which can be used when raising invoices.
- If you have issues getting set up, further guidance will be available on the Vet Gateway.
- Follow the current inspection process to perform an EHC check.
- If the goods pass inspection you can sign the certificate as you do now.
- You'll need to log into EHC Online after the inspection to confirm the checks have been completed, and the details in EHC Online are in line with the certification you've provided on the EHC.

## Reimbursement

- For GB-NI certificates, invoices should be consolidated into regular batches, at least monthly.
- This invoice should detail the individual GB-NI EHCs which have been certified and the cost of each certificate.
- This invoice should also include the purchase order number provided to you by APHA.
- You will need to email the invoice to APHA for reimbursement. This email address will be available on the Vet Gateway.
- Payment will be made to your bank account held on file.
- EHCs will be capped at £150, excluding VAT.
- Equine EHCs will be capped at £500, excluding VAT.

- These caps cover the cost of the EHC with additional allowances for reasonable travel expenses, in line with current HMRC rates.

## Further Information

For GB-EU and GB-ROW certificates you should continue to invoice traders as normal.

We will monitor the performance of the scheme, and review it after three months to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders.

For more information on the announcement and the support, advice and guidance available to traders, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/movement-assistance-scheme-get-help-with-moving-agrifood-goods-to-northern-ireland>