INTRACOMMUNITY TRADE IN POULTRY FOR BREEDING AND PRODUCTION

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE OF THE OFFICIAL VETERINARIAN (OV) AND EXPORTER

1. KEY DOCUMENTS

The following key documents must be read and understood prior to completing and signing the Intra-trade Animal Health Certificate for poultry for breeding and production.

- Poultry-Breeding-Production -NFG - this document
- Poultry-Breeding-Production-CKL - checklist procedures
- Poultry-Salmonella-NFG – salmonella guidance re Finland and Sweden

2. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE:

The OV will be authorised to certify freedom from notifiable disease if he/she has received confirmation on the form TRACES NDC. This will be provided by the DVM within 10 days prior to despatch, and will cover the following paragraphs on the checklist: 1, 2, and 3.

3. SCOPE:

The ITAHC 90/539 IV 3 may be used for the export of breeding and productive poultry (any birds aged 4 days or older) to another Member State of the European Union, or to Switzerland. Exports of live poultry and hatching eggs to countries within the European Union are harmonised under Council Directive 90/539/EEC (as amended). Under separate EU legislation poultry movements between Switzerland and the EU Member States are treated in the same way as EU internal movements.

Poultry is defined in the Directive as “fowl, turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks, geese, quail, pigeons, pheasants, partridges and ratites, reared or kept in captivity for breeding, the production of meat or eggs for consumption, or for re-stocking supplies of game”.

Ratites. Special conditions for ratites have been introduced by Council Directive 1999/90/EC, amending Directive 90/539/EEC. The ‘under 20’ concession does not apply to them, and they are subject to the conditions of the standard EU certificates for hatching eggs, day old birds or adult birds regardless of the size of the consignment. This means that they must originate from an establishment which is a member of the Poultry Health Scheme.

4. CHECKLIST:

(a) Separate consignments

A separate ITAHC export health certificate and a separate checklist must be completed for each separate consignment. A ‘consignment’ is defined as a group of birds of the same health status, from the same premises, travelling together in one container or vehicle to the same consignee at the same place of destination.

(b) Support documents

If the flock of origin is covered by a different veterinarian from the OV who completes the ITAHC (for example if the birds are gathered for export at a pre-export isolation premises at some distance from the flock of origin), a separate checklist must be completed by the veterinarian at the flock of origin. The flock veterinarian must be an
MRCVS or FRCVS, but it is not essential for him/her to be an Official Veterinarian on the poultry export panel 1. k. The checklist must be signed by the flock veterinarian as a support document and forwarded by fax or post to the OV at the final point of departure who completes the ITAHC.

(c) **Approved establishment: question 1**
Flocks and hatcheries must be approved under Directive 90/539/EEC in order to export to other member States of the EU. In Great Britain approval is implemented by membership of the Poultry Health Scheme (PHS). The DVM will confirm that the flock of origin is currently a member of the PHS on the TRACES NDC form.

(d) **Notifiable diseases: questions 2 and 3**
The DVM will confirm on the TRACES NDC form that the premises of origin are free from disease restrictions as described.

(e) **6-week Approval limit: question 4**
Note that a flock must have been a member of the PHS for at least 6 weeks before it may export to another member State of the EU.

(f) **Approved vaccines: question 5**
Any vaccine used in the flock of origin must have a marketing authorisation issued by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) of DEFRA. On rare occasions VMD may have issued a Special Treatment Certificate (STC) to allow the use of a vaccine specifically created for use in an individual flock with a particular disease problem. The STC can be regarded as equivalent to a marketing authorisation.

(g) **Inspection of Flock of Origin: question 6**
A clinical examination of the birds must be carried out within 48 hours of export.

(h) **Disinfection of vehicles: question 12**
Disinfectants are approved by Defra under the Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) Order 1978 (a amended). The list contains over 200 brands of disinfectant approved for use with poultry on the basis of their efficacy against Newcastle disease and avian influenza viruses. Defra approved disinfectants carry a statement on the container, and other references to their approval may be found in their data sheets or label instructions.

(j) **Newcastle disease vaccination: question 13**
The additional certification is required only for those countries which do not permit Newcastle disease vaccination, and whose status has been accepted by the EU Commission. At present those countries are Finland, Sweden and Switzerland.

The certifying veterinarian must rely on personal knowledge of the premises, supported if necessary by written declarations from any other veterinarians with responsibility for the flocks of origin, and the owner/exporter.

Concerning isolation conditions, the OV must visit the isolation premises at least at the beginning and the end of the 14 day period in order to certify that isolation has been observed.

The serological testing must be carried out at a laboratory of the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA). The number of samples per flock must be sufficient to give a probability of 95% that infection will be detected if the prevalence is at least 5%. The number of samples necessary to achieve this is given in the following table:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of birds in flock</th>
<th>Number of samples to be taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>up to 20</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-89</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-199</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 or more</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(k) **Avian Influenza Vaccination: question 14**
See the detailed explanation below in paragraph 5 (k) of these notes.

5. **COMPLETION OF ITAHC**

(a) **Part 1, box I.31 - identification of the animals**
The following details should be given as a minimum:
- Poultry species;
- Category (ie: pure line/grandparents/parents/laying pullets/fattening/others);
- Identification codes on the containers

The Official Veterinarian must be satisfied that the consignment meets the identification description throughout Part I of the ITAHC certificate. The OV (NOT someone in the employ of the exporter, transporter or agent) is responsible for verifying the identification marks or other appropriate details recorded in the certificate.

(b) **Part II, section II. 1. (a) – Articles in the Directive**
The content of Articles 6,9,15 are covered by the Checklist. Article 6 covers approval details of the premises of origin, Article 9 covers health details of the flock of origin, and Article 15 covers transport procedures. The section may be certified if all the answers to Checklist questions 1 to 12 are ‘Yes’.

(c) **Part II, section II. 1. (b) – Articles in the Directive**
Article 12 (1)(c) covers special requirements relating to Newcastle disease vaccination which apply only to exports to Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, and checklist question 13 refers. The section may be certified if the consignment is destined for one of those countries, and the all answers to checklist question13 are ‘Yes’. Otherwise the OV should delete the section.

(d) **Part II, section II. 1. (c) - Articles 13 and 14 of the Directive**
These Articles refer to additional guarantees in respect of Salmonella which apply only to exports of day old or adult birds to Finland and Sweden. The additional guarantees are covered below in section II. 1. (e) and (f). Therefore section II. 1. (c) is redundant in this certificate. The spaces should be left blank and the section may be ignored.
(e) **Part II, section II. 1. (d) - Newcastle disease vaccination**
Newcastle disease vaccination is not compulsory, but where a vaccine is used, the date of vaccination, type and strain must be entered in this paragraph of the ITAHC. This is to provide epidemiological information in the event of an outbreak of disease.

(f) **Part II, section II. 1. (e) and (f) - Commission Decision 2003/644/EC Commission Decision 2004/235/EC**
These Decisions allow additional conditions in respect of Salmonella only for exports to Finland and Sweden. See the separate notes ‘Poultry-Salmonella-NFG’ if the consignment is destined for Finland or Sweden. The sections may be certified if the consignment is destined for one of those countries, and the relevant conditions in the Salmonella-NFG have been fulfilled. Otherwise the sections should be deleted.

**Part II. 2. Public Health Attestation**

Regulation 2160/2003 lays down a testing programme for certain Salmonellas of human significance: *S.enteritidis*, *S.hadar*, *S.infantis*, *S.typhimurium*, and *S.virchow*.

The regulations currently apply ONLY to flocks of the chicken species (*Gallus gallus*). From January 2007 onwards they apply to breeding flocks, and from February 2008 they will also apply to flocks laying table eggs. From January 2009 they will be extended to apply to flocks of broiler chickens, and in 2010 breeding turkeys. If the species being exported is not chickens in the appropriate category, none of part II.2. applies and the OV should mark it as ‘Not Applicable’.

Note that this part is not covered by the CKL. The OV must certify it on the basis of his/her knowledge of the flock, an examination of relevant records and laboratory reports, and any necessary support statements.

(g) **Part II, section II. 2. (a) - Salmonella testing**
The Regulation 2160/2003 is implemented in England by the Poultry Breeding Flocks and Hatcheries (England) Order 2007 (PBFHO) and its equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. If the chicken flock is routinely tested according to the PBFHO, the first sentence of this paragraph can be certified.

Concerning the results of testing, it should be described as positive ONLY if:
In the case of breeding flocks, *S.hadar*, *S.virchow*, or *S.infantis* are detected.
In the case of table egg layers, *S.enteritidis* or *S.typhimurium* are detected
If any other serotype is detected, or if none are detected, the result may be described as negative. The inapplicable line MUST be deleted.

(h) **Part II, section II. 2. (b)**
Note that this section applies ONLY to breeding flocks. Thus, if the result in the section above is shown as positive, but this section is certified as negative, it is clear that the flock was only positive for either *S.hadar*, or *S.virchow* or *S.infantis*. The significance of this is that the export may be allowed to proceed, subject to the agreement of the receiving country, if the flock has been positive for one of those three, but not if it was positive for *S.enteritidis* or *S.typhimurium*. This is admittedly a tortuous way of expressing things. The Commission’s reason for designing the ITAHC in this way is in order to allow for the phasing in of future testing requirements, without having to make further changes in the certificate.
Part II. 3 Additional Health Information

(j) Part II, section II. 3. 1 – Avian Influenza vaccination
Under Council Directive 2005/94/EC, vaccination of poultry against avian influenza is not permitted within the EU, except in special circumstances in the face of an unusually high perceived risk of disease. In this case a special Decision will be issued specifying the conditions under which it is permitted. Vaccination of certain zoo birds is permitted subject to strict licence conditions. The OV must certify this section on the basis of his/her knowledge of the flock and any necessary support statements, and ensure that the premises of origin is not a zoo at which vaccination has been carried out (see question 14 of the checklist).

(k) Part II - Signature
The Official Veterinarian must sign and stamp the ITAHC with the Official Veterinarian’s official stamp in ink of any colour other than black. The completed ITAHC parts I and II on a single sheet of paper will accompany the consignment to its final destination.

6. FORM TRACES-CONF:
NOTIFICATION TO THE ISSUING AHDO OF COMPLETION AND SIGNATURE / AMENDMENT OF ITAHC

In order to meet the requirement for notification of animal movements to other Member States, Official Veterinarians must notify the AHDO that an ITAHC has been completed and signed. To do this, the Official Veterinarian must complete and sign a copy of the confirmation document TRACES-CONF.

Completed copies of the following documents must be faxed to the exports section of the AHDO within one working day following signature of the ITAHC:

- form TRACES-CONF
- Part 1 of the ITAHC (indicating any amendments)
- completed Part 2 of the ITAHC

Certified Copy of ITAHCs

In cases where it is not possible to fax a copy of the original ITAHC following signature, Official Veterinarians are strongly advised to make a copy of the ITAHC prior to completion. This copy must be clearly marked ‘certified copy’ and completed with the same details as the original. The certified copy should not be signed as an original but cancelled with the practice stamp.

Any amendments to Part 1 of the ITAHC, e.g. changes in identification numbers of animals in the consignment, must be clearly indicated so that the necessary amendments can be made by the AHDO prior to sending the TRACES movement notification to the destination Member State.
7. **WELFARE OF THE ANIMALS:**

Exporters should be reminded that they must comply with the British laws relating to the welfare of animals. Information about the necessary requirements may be obtained from the following offices:

**ENGLAND**  Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR.  
Tel: 0207 238 6911

**SCOTLAND**  Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department  
Pentland House, 47 Robb’s Loan, Edinburgh. EH14 1TW  
Tel: 0131 244 6482

**WALES**  National Assembly for Wales, Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer,  
Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ.  
Tel: 02920 823593

**NORTHERN IRELAND**  Department of Agriculture and Rural Development  
Northern Ireland, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road  
Belfast, BT4 3SB  
Tel: 028 9052 4999

These Notes For Guidance and the Checklist to which they refer are not part of the export health certificate and so should not be attached to it, nor accompany the consignment to the final destination. All completed Checklists should be retained by the certifying veterinarian for a period of 12 months.