INTRACOMMUNITY TRADE IN POULTRY FOR RE-STOCKING GAME SUPPLIES
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 re-stocking game supplies:

- Poultry-Re-stocking-Game-NFG - this document
- Poultry-Re-stocking-Game-CKL - checklist procedures

2. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE CLEARANCE

Official Veterinarians may certify the following paragraphs of the Checklist on behalf of the Department provided written authority to do so has been obtained from the local Animal Health Divisional Office on form TRACES-NDC:

- Questions 4 and 5 of Poultry- Re-stocking-Game -CKL

The TRACES-NDC must bear the same certificate reference number as the ITAHC to which it relates.

3. SCOPE:

The ITAHC 90/539 IV 6 may be used for the export of poultry of the game bird species 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”.

**Wild game:** means wild birds that are hunted for human consumption. Note that birds that were hatched and reared in captivity are regarded as wild birds once they have been released in the environment. If they are being reared for this purpose but have not yet been released, this certificate will apply to them.

This ITAHC certificate applies only to birds aged **72 hours old or more**. It does not apply to game species which are hatching eggs or day old birds (up to 72 hours old). These must be exported on the relevant ITAHC certificate for standard poultry.

4. CHECKLIST:

(a) **Purpose of Checklist**

The ITAHC requires the OV to certify compliance with Articles in the Directives rather than itemising each condition separately. The checklists are provided in order to explain each of those conditions, and if the answer to each question in the checklists is ‘Yes’, the consignment will comply with the relevant Articles of the Directives.
(b) **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 eggs 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.

(c) **Question 3 - Flock of origin inspection**
Under Article 10a of Directive 90/539/EEC the inspection of the flock of origin is required within 48 hours of export. However, a subsequent ruling in Commission Decision 2006/605/EC reduces this interval to 24 hours prior to export.

(d) **Questions 4 and 5 - Notifiable diseases**
The DVM will confirm on the TRACES NDC form that the premises of origin are free from disease restrictions as described.

(e) **Question 9 - Disinfection of vehicles**
Disinfectants are approved by Defra under the Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) Order 1978 (as 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.

(f) **Question 10 - Newcastle disease vaccination**
This additional vaccination information 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 question may be deleted in all other cases.

In order to satisfy the final indent, blood samples must be taken at random from the flock of origin during the 14 days preceding consignment and sent to the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) Weybridge/Lasswade where they must be tested serologically for Newcastle disease antibodies with negative results in each case. The number of birds to be sampled should be based on the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of birds in flock</th>
<th>Number of samples to be taken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 20</td>
<td>All of the flock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</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>

(g) **Question 11 and 12 - Game Biosecurity Guidance**
The Commission Decision 2006/605/EC was introduced in September 2006 in view of the apparently increasing risk of exposure of poultry within the EU to avian influenza. As game birds are normally reared in outdoor conditions, they were felt to be more at risk than commercial poultry bred indoors. A copy of Defra’s biosecurity guidance is attached as an annex to these notes.
(h) **Question 13 - Surveillance testing**
If the OV cannot answer sub-question (a) from his/her personal knowledge of the premises of origin, he/she should consult the DVM. If option (b) is chosen, the samples must be submitted to VLA Weybridge/Lasswade. It is recommended that the OV should specify the agar gel immunodiffusion (AGID) test, because this single test will detect antibodies to all subtypes of avian influenza virus.

(i) **Question 14 - Testing of the Birds for Export**
Note that this applies only if the birds are less than one month of age. There is no requirement to test birds older than this, and the question may be deleted if the birds are older. The samples for testing must be submitted to VLA Weybridge/Lasswade. The OV should specify testing by the PCR method, as virus isolation culture takes 12 days to confirm a negative result. The laboratory may pool samples at their normal rate in the interest of efficiency and economy.

(j) **Question 15 - Avian influenza vaccination**
The statement concerning vaccination must be certified by the OV on the basis of either his/her knowledge of the premises of origin, or a support statement from other veterinarians regularly responsible for the premises. If necessary the OV may ask the owner/manager of the premises for a written declaration. Note that under the EU avian influenza control Directive 2005/94/EC, vaccination of poultry in the EU is not permitted except under exceptional circumstances when it must be authorised by specific EU legislation.

5. **COMPLETION OF ITAHC: SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

(a) **Completion of Part 1, box I.31 - identification of the animals**
Exporters must complete Box I.31 of Part 1 with the following information:
- Poultry species;
- Age of birds
- Identification codes on the containers

The Official Veterinarian must be satisfied that the birds meet the identification description recorded in Part I.31 of the health 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 10a and 15 are covered by the Checklist. Article 10a covers health details of the flock of origin, and Article 15 covers transport procedures. The section may be certified if all the answers to questions 1 to 9 on the Checklist 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 10 refers. If the consignment is destined for one of those countries and the answer to all indents of checklist question 10 is ‘Yes’, the section may be certified. Otherwise it should be deleted.
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 Finland and Sweden. However there are no conditions currently applying to the export of re-stocking game birds to these countries. The spaces should be left blank and the section can be ignored.

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 section of the ITAHC. This is to provide epidemiological information in the event of an outbreak of disease. Any lines that do not apply must be deleted. Note the special conditions that apply only in the case of exports to Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, for which vaccination is forbidden (paragraph 5. (c) above).

Part II. 2. Additional Health Information

Part II, section II. 2. 1 – Vaccination for Avian Influenza

Checklist question 15 refers, and the section may be certified if the answer to question 15 is ‘yes’. Vaccination of poultry against avian influenza is not permitted within the EU, except under special circumstances in view of an exceptional perceived risk, and then it will be authorised by a specific Commission Decision.

Part II, section II. 2. 2 – Commission Decision 2006/605/EC

This Decision, adopted in September 2005, was enacted in order to deal with the perceived high risk of avian influenza being contracted by game birds reared in the open air. This statement may be certified if the answers to questions 11 to 14 of the checklist are ‘yes’.

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
8. ANNEX TO NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

BIOSECURITY LEAFLET PRODUCED JOINTLY BY DEFRA, SEERAD and NAW in 2006

PROTECT YOUR BIRDS FROM THE RISK OF AVIAN INFLUENZA (Bird Flu)

1. Keep bird feed and any standing drinking water free from contamination by wild birds and other animals. This might mean feeding and watering under cover.

2. Make sure your premises are tidy and clean. Spilled feed, litter and standing water attract wild birds and vermin.

3. Keep your birds separate from wild birds, waterfowl, pets and other animals. Control vermin.

4. Keep visitors and other vehicles away from your birds as far as possible. If they must have access, make sure vehicles and equipment are clean.

5. Make sure your clothes, footwear and hands are clean, before and after contact with birds. Any essential visitors should do the same.

6. Avoid sharing equipment. If you do have to share, make sure it is cleansed and disinfected before and after use.

7. Buy feed from a mill or supplier that operates in accordance with Defra and Agricultural Industries Confederation Codes of Practice. Supply clean, fresh drinking water.

8. Be vigilant when purchasing new stock. Use reputable sources. Isolate new birds and birds you have taken off your premises (for example to a show).


10. If you suspect disease, act quickly and consult your vet. Avian influenza and Newcastle disease are notifiable diseases and must be reported to your local Divisional Veterinary Manager.

GOOD BIOSECURITY IS VITAL
Many diseases, not only avian influenza but also others like Newcastle disease, Salmonella and Campylobacter are spread by direct bird-to-bird contact through secretions and faeces, and indirectly through contaminated feed, water, equipment, boots etc. If in doubt about what to do, seek advice from your vet.

For More Information:
Visit the Defra website at www.defra.gov.uk or phone the helpline on 08459 33 55 77
Other useful websites:
Health Protection Agency: www.hpa.org.uk
Health and Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk
Department of Health: www.dh.gov.uk
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.