



HM Government

UK TRANSITION



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## MOVEMENT ASSISTANCE SCHEME

August 2021

V4.0



The following FAQs will attempt to clarify some of the key questions surrounding the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).

## Contents

<b>MOVEMENT ASSISTANCE SCHEME</b> .....	1
Introducing the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).....	3
Accessibility .....	9
Helpline .....	9
Security .....	10
Misuse/Abuse .....	11
Fairness/Equality .....	11
Financial Support .....	12
General.....	12
New Expansions - PHEATS, Testing Sheep for Scrapie .....	13
New Expansions - ISTA, Organics .....	14
Reimbursement of EHC Costs and Invoice Process .....	15
Certifiers of EHCs Claiming Time Spent on Travel from 1 April 2021 .....	18
MAS Organics .....	20
General.....	20
Traders of Organic Products .....	20
Organic Control Bodies .....	21
MAS for Certain Types of High-Risk Food and Feed of Non-Animal Origin (HRFNAO).....	24
General.....	24
Traders of HRFNAO .....	26
Certifiers of HRFNAO.....	27



## Introducing the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS)

### Why has MAS been set up?

Defra are supporting traders who move agri-food commodities (including but not limited to: live animals, products of animal origin, plants and plant products, organic products and certain high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO)) between Great Britain (GB) to Northern Ireland (NI). This support is available through the Movement Assistance Scheme (MAS).

MAS currently:

- **advises traders and certifiers** on new requirements
- **provides financial support** by reimbursing some of the costs of these new measures

Through MAS, Defra are supporting traders to ensure they can trade goods from GB to NI in compliance with the requirements of the NI Protocol, including health, marketing standards and certain certification requirements.

### What does MAS do?

MAS provides support for traders moving agri-food goods and equines from GB to NI following the end of the transition period. It provides traders with assistance to understand the new regulations for moving goods from GB to NI. Second, MAS reimburses some of the costs that would be incurred by traders for moving agri-food commodities and equines under the new requirements. Certifiers of agri-foods moving from GB-NI that require certification can receive financial support for some of the direct costs of checking and issuing Export Health Certificates (EHCs), Phytosanitary Certificates (PCs) and Certificates of Inspection (COIs) —up to a certain amount. From 1 April 2021, MAS also reimburses the cost of official certificates (including lab sampling) required for the movement of HRFNAO listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#) and products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#).

In addition, from 1 July 2021, MAS support includes the audit inspection cost incurred to register with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) and ongoing audit costs, for the export of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers from GB to NI. It also includes costs related to testing sheep for scrapie as required for certification. From 1 August 2021, traders receive financial support for the costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI. From 1 August, some fees are covered for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB.



### Who is MAS for?

MAS is set up to support traders who move agri-food goods from GB to NI. Certifiers can claim reimbursement of some of the direct costs, up to a set limit, for the checking and issuing of certification for certain consignments from GB to NI, and some other costs related to the new requirements. If a business is moving certain agri-foods (including but not limited to: live animals, plants and plant products, organic products and certain HRFNAO) that require certification, the costs will be reimbursed by the Movement Assistance Scheme.

### Should I use the MAS helpline to support me when moving goods from GB to NI?

The first place to go to seek advice is the dedicated [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) page. The helpline 0330 0416 580 is staffed with advisors who have general information, based on the GOV.UK pages, to support traders.

### What are the benefits of MAS?

MAS is in place to support traders moving agri-food goods from GB to NI, from the end of the transition period until the end of December 2023 — protecting food security and recognising the importance of the agri-food industries.

1. There is comprehensive guidance for traders on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and for certifiers on [Vet Gateway](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vet-gateway). Questions about the process should be answered there.
2. A helpline provides support to businesses and certifiers moving agri-food goods GB to NI
3. The Government will reimburse the direct costs of new certifications requirements directly to the certifier.  
EHCs are currently subject to a cap of up to £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs. Certificate of inspections cap is currently set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: the caps only apply to the amount the Government will reimburse). The Government will also reimburse up to £150 excl. VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie disease, as required as part of the export health certification.
4. Following a period of review MAS now also reimburses the cost of official certificates (including lab sampling) required for the movement of HRFNAO products listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#) and products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#)
5. Some new costs related to meeting the new requirements are also covered by MAS. This support includes the audit inspection cost incurred to register with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) and ongoing audit costs, for the export of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers from GB to NI. It also includes costs related to testing sheep for scrapie as required for certification. From 1 August 2021, traders receive financial support for the costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI. From 1 August 2021, the Government supports businesses with meeting new costs for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB.



### **How does MAS differ from the Trader Support Service (TSS)?**

The MAS package of support has been developed by Defra to sit alongside Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)'s Trader Support Scheme (TSS). This has a wider remit to assist traders with customs procedures and processes. MAS supports traders moving agri-food commodities and equines from GB to NI. MAS is a service specific to traders of agri-food and has no interlink with the TSS.

TSS supports the movement of all goods, whilst MAS serves only the movement of agri-food.

### **What is the reimbursement cap on Export Health Certificates?**

Reimbursements are currently subject to a reasonable cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse). Up to 31 March 2021, reasonable mileage expenses were reimbursed in line with HMRC's approved mileage rates. From 1 April, mileage costs cannot be claimed anymore; instead certifiers can claim for time spent on travel. The time spent on travel will form part of the overall certification cost. The Government will also reimburse up to £150 excl. VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie disease, as required as part of the export health certification.

### **What is the reimbursement cap for Certificates of Inspection for organic products?**

The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse)

### **Is MAS a permanent service?**

Following a recent review, MAS will continue to provide traders with advice and guidance via the dedicated MAS helpline and financial support until the end of December 2023. The Government will continue to monitor the performance of the scheme, to determine how best to provide ongoing support to traders.

### **Who oversees MAS?**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and its delivery bodies oversee MAS.

### **Are foreign traders entitled to reimbursement?**

Goods passing through GB to get to NI are not eligible. Agri-food goods moved from GB to NI are eligible for support through the MAS programme. If goods are opened, repacked, or tampered with in GB, they will be subject to the same requirements as goods starting their journey in GB to NI.

### **What impacts will small-to-medium enterprises see as a result of the change to trade?**

MAS supports all traders, regardless of size or type of business.

### **My goods are not subject to the new requirements. Do I still need to engage with MAS?**

No. MAS is a support scheme for agri-food traders moving goods that require certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV), Local Authority (LA), The Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI) or other certifying officer such as an organic control body. If a trader's goods are not subject to new requirements under the NI Protocol, they do not have any requirement to engage with MAS.



**Do the new requirements apply to other traders moving goods to NI?**

This FAQ addresses only questions for traders who are moving agri-food commodities from GB to NI and the relevant authorities should be consulted on other areas of trade.

**Does it make a difference if my goods are for humanitarian, medical or diplomatic purposes?**

No. Any goods that need the relevant certifications are subject to the new requirements. MAS can support any trader moving such agri-food goods.



### **Should I be engaging with other parties involved in the movement of goods on MAS?**

If traders are looking to reimburse some of their applicable certifying costs, they must engage with a certifying officer who is registered on EHC Online or APHA (for plants and plant products). If traders engage with a veterinarian who is not registered, the costs will be incurred by the trader and cannot be reimbursed.

Traders of HRFNAO should engage with their LA in the first instance (regarding certification) and may need to provide evidence of the cost of lab sampling/analysis (the lab may provide the LA with this).

Traders moving organic products from GB to NI should contact their organic control body.

### **Do the fees apply to traders only landing at ports?**

Agri-food goods moved from GB to NI are eligible for support through the MAS programme. Goods passing through GB to get to NI are not eligible. If goods are opened, repacked, or tampered with in GB, they will be subject to the same requirements as goods starting their journey in GB to NI.

### **What do traders need to do to apply for an EHC?**

Traders need to register on [EHC Online](#):

1. Traders need to fill in the online form for an EHC and include the details of where the goods are going
2. As part of the application they need to select their certifier on EHC Online (If certifier details are unable to be found, the certifier will need to register online)
3. Trader and certifier agree to certification arrangements (time, date etc.)
4. Checks carried out by the certifier
5. Assuming the checks are successful the certifier will provide the trader with the EHC

### **What do traders of plants/plant products need to do to apply for a Phytosanitary Certificate (England & Wales)?**

1. Traders need to register on eDomero:
2. Traders should use eDomero to fill in the online form for a Phytosanitary certificate (PC), including the details of where the goods are going
3. As part of the application they need to confirm if a sample of their products require inspecting. If so, traders will need to follow those instructions
4. Application will be reviewed by an APHA inspector
5. Assuming the checks are successful, the trader will be supplied with a PC

### **What do traders of organic products need to do to apply for a certificate of inspection (COI)?**

Traders should apply for the required checks needed for goods to travel from GB to NI in the usual way.

1. Traders of organic agri-food products should continue to use the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([Traces NT](#)) process to apply for COIs
2. Certifiers of COIs must be registered on Traces NT. Traders must contact the certifier (organic control body) to arrange the certification



### **What do traders of HRFNAO need to do to apply for an official certificate?**

The high-level process below outlines the steps traders should continue to follow when moving HRFNAO from GB to NI. This process does not currently apply to Authorised Traders (supermarkets and their trusted suppliers). Authorised Traders can continue to move certain HRFNAO products from GB to NI without the need for official certification until at least 1 October 2021. Authorised Traders should continue to use [STAMNI compliance declaration form](#) to move these goods from GB to NI

1. Trader logs onto [GOV.UK](#), downloads and completes Part 1 of the relevant official certificate
2. Trader sends a request to the LA for lab sampling and certification
3. LA sends a certifying officer to visit the site to take samples and send the samples to an official laboratory
4. Lab analyses samples and sends the results back to the certifying officer at the LA
5. Certifying officer completes Part 2 of the official certificate and provides a copy, returns the lab results, the report, and the completed official certificate to the trader
6. The LA sends an invoice to APHA for the reimbursement of lab sampling and official certificate costs
7. Trader sends copies of the official certificate and the lab results to the NI importer. Importer pre-notifies the arrival of the goods by completing Part 1 of a Common Health Entry Document ([CHED](#)) on the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([TRACES NT](#))
8. The original certificate and lab results must travel with the goods
9. On arrival in NI, goods will be subject to documentary checks, and ID and physical checks at the frequency set out in the legislation. The outcome of the checks is recorded on Part 2 of the CHED on TRACES

Visit [GOV.UK](#) for detailed guidance on the steps traders should follow or view a HRFNAO process map [here](#).



## Accessibility

### **I don't have access to the internet—how can I access MAS?**

You will be able to seek advice from the helpline if you are not unable to access GOV.UK.

### **Is MAS accessible?**

All Government resources are designed to be as accessible and enable as many people as possible to use.

### **Is MAS support available in other languages?**

Customers will be able to ask for a Welsh speaking representative on the helpline if preferred.

### **Will the online information service be easy to use and access?**

Our aim to provide a service that is easy to access and use. We believe the information available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), supported with the helpline, provides an efficient and easy to use service.

### **Do I need a Government Gateway account as I don't have an account?**

EHC Online allows you to request certification and invoice the reimbursement of costs for EHC's.

If you do not already have one, you will need to register for a Government Gateway account to access [EHC Online](#).

## Helpline

### **How can I reach the MAS helpline?**

If you have read the information on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and still require further general information on moving goods from GB to NI, the helpline is available on 0330 0416 580.

The MAS helpline is unable to help regarding reimbursements or status updates for individual cases. Traders moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their organic control body for advice. Traders moving HRFNAO can also contact their Local Authority for guidance.

### **When is the helpline open?**

Agents are available from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

### **What can the helpline support me with?**

Call agents can provide guidance based on the information on the GOV.UK pages and provide support for goods that require certification by an Official Veterinarian (OV), Local Authority (LA), Plant Health and Seed Inspectors (PHSI), other Certifying Officers.

Traders moving organic products from GB to NI can also contact their organic control body for advice. Traders moving HRFNAO can also contact their Local Authority for guidance. The helpline is only able to support queries regarding the movement from GB to NI.



### **Why has the helpline been set up?**

As a part of the MAS programme, the helpline 0330 0416 580 is in place to provide advice and support to traders.

### **Who is the helpline managed by?**

The helpline is managed by Defra, with agents from across its delivery bodies.

### **How will the helpline be staffed?**

We have a team of call agents who have the information to answer your questions about the practicalities of a new certification processes.

## **Security**

### **I am concerned about privacy/commercial confidentiality. Can you confirm all the required security measures are in place?**

GOV.UK is provided by the Government Digital Service (GDS), part of the Cabinet Office. The Cabinet Office is the data controller for pages starting with www.gov.uk - for example, www.gov.uk/pip. If you follow a link to a service provided by another Government department, agency or local authority that organisation will:

- be the data controller
- be responsible for processing any data you share with them
- publish and manage their own [privacy notice](#) with details of how to contact them

### **How will you guarantee payment data is secure?**

We are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We have set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure of your data—for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption. We also make sure that any third parties that we deal with keep all personal data they process on our behalf secure.

### **What level of encryption/ security is in place?**

We are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We have set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access or disclosure of your data—for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption. We also make sure that any third parties that we deal with keep all personal data they process on our behalf secure.



## Misuse/Abuse

### **What happens if I attempt to trade without the certification required?**

Traders without the relevant certifications will not be able to move goods to NI.

### **Is this a chance for opportunistic certifiers to charge more money for certifications than they did prior to MAS?**

Reimbursement costs will be capped to ensure claims fall within usual limits.

### **Is MAS compliant with GDPR and other EU regulations?**

We design, build and run our systems to make sure that your data is as safe as possible at all stages, both while it's processed and when it's stored. We collect information through Google Analytics to see how you use the site and Government digital services. All personal data is stored in the European Economic Area (EEA). Data collected by Google Analytics may be transferred outside the EEA for processing.

## Fairness/Equality

### **Will hauliers be reimbursed for time?**

Hauliers are not impacted by MAS, which is set up to provide specific support to traders and certifiers.

### **Is there a risk that certifiers will select the higher paid jobs, and small businesses will find it difficult to get certified?**

MAS cannot influence how certifiers manage workloads. We have set a threshold/cap for reimbursement of costs, which we believe this is a fair approach for all.



# Financial Support

## General

### **What are the benefits of the reimbursement process for traders?**

MAS provides financial support for some of the new costs incurred in meeting the certification requirements of the NI Protocol. In doing so, MAS provides continuity of goods movement from GB to NI without traders incurring a significant increase in overall cost (indirect costs are not covered by MAS).

### **What costs can be reimbursed via MAS?**

The costs for EHCs, PCs, Official Certificates (including lab sampling costs) for certain HRFNAO products and certificates of inspection (COI) can be reimbursed.

Export Health Certificate reimbursements are subject to a reasonable cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse). Certifiers can claim for time spent on travel. This is included in the total certification cost. The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT. For certain HRFNAO products, the Government will reimburse the cost of certification and lab sampling, against the size of the consignment, directly to the LA. Please refer to the [HRFNAO section](#) for full scope requirements.

On 1 July 2021, the scheme was expanded. MAS offers support with the cost of certification requirements under the NI Protocol. This support includes the audit inspection cost incurred to register with PHEATS (Plant Health Exports Audited Trader Scheme) and ongoing audit costs, for the movement of fruit, vegetables and cut flowers solely from GB to NI. It also includes costs related to testing sheep for scrapie as required for certification. The Government will reimburse up to £150 excl. VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie disease, as required as part of the export health certification.

From 1 August 2021, traders will also receive financial support for the costs related to ISTA (International Seed Testing Association) sample testing and certification required for all individual seed lots traded GB to NI. Also, the Government will look to support businesses with meeting new costs for exporters in GB who move organics solely to NI, and NI importers who face new costs to receive these goods from GB.

In addition, MAS will continue to explore the options to cover costs related to Support Attestations. More details will be announced shortly.



## **New Expansions - PHEATS, Testing Sheep for Scrapie**

### **How does PHEATS provide financial support to traders?**

From 1 July 2021, traders registered to PHEATs receive defrayment of initial registration costs (£313) and subsequent audit costs (£172) where trade is to GB-NI only.

### **How does the defrayment process work?**

Where trade is GB-NI only, the initial registration and audit charges are waived by the APHA finance team, as well as the costs for issuance of the PC.

### **What happens if a trader moves goods outside of NI under PHEATS?**

Where goods are exported to a destination other than NI, charges will no longer be waived, and the trader will be invoiced by the APHA finance team.

Traders with queries about this expansion could also visit the [PHEATS website](#) for contact details.

### **How does MAS expansion provide financial support to traders moving sheep from GB-NI?**

From 1 July 2021, traders moving sheep GB-NI only receive support against the costs for scrapie genotype tests.

### **How does the reimbursement process work?**

The trader will not be charged for the costs of scrapie genotype tests where the stock is intended to move from GB-NI only. The laboratories processing the genotype samples will invoice the OV's for the tests for stock intended to move from GB-NI. The OV will invoice the Defra finance team with the supporting documentation - the laboratory genotype results form and the EHC - demonstrating the trade movement.

### **Can an OV seek reimbursement for genotype tests for stock intended for NI where results point to an animal having scrapie?**

Yes. An OV can include the costs of the genotype tests for the intended movement of stock from GB-NI only, irrespective of the test results. This will be kept under review.

### **Are there additional costs associated with scrapie testing of stock intended for the movement of GB-NI only for which an OV can seek reimbursement?**

Yes. An OV can claim up to £150 per inspection excluding VAT for the costs related to testing sheep for scrapie, as required as part of the EHC. OV's can include time spent on travel on an invoice, based on current charge out rates. Costs should reflect the OV's existing cost structure.

We advise traders with queries about this expansion to call their OV.



## New Expansions - ISTA, Organics

### How will MAS provide financial support to costs associated with the ISTA certification process?

From 1 August 2021, traders requiring Orange International Certificates (OIC) for the movement of seeds GB-NI only will be eligible to receive defrayment of costs.

### How will the defrayment process work?

Where movement is GB-NI only, the issuing bodies (either ([NIAB](#) or [SASA](#))) will waive the costs of the OIC to the trader. The issuing body will invoice Defra for the reimbursement of the costs of certification for the seeds moving from GB-NI only.

### What happens if a trader moves goods outside of GB-NI?

Where goods are detected to have a destination other than NI, the issuing body ([NIAB](#) or [SASA](#)) will invoice the trader for the charges of the OIC.

### How does MAS provide financial support to traders moving organics?

Organic control bodies can invoice the Government for the costs of certifying and inspecting organic goods moving GB-NI (COI). The Certificates of Inspection (COIs) are already in the scope of MAS.

From 1 August 2021, the Government also reimburses the licencing component of registration with their organic control body where they move goods solely GB to NI. This includes the importer/exporter licencing component of organic registration costs faced by exporters operating out of GB who move organics solely to NI and now must license as such, and importers in NI who face new costs to license as an importer to receive these goods from GB, provided that the registering control body is UK based.

### How will the process work?

The new costs faced by exporters/importers will be paid by traders and reimbursed by the Government, once traders have demonstrated that they have only imported/exported NI-GB or vice versa, at the end of that licencing period.

You will need to complete an application form, including payment information and declaration that movements have been solely between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This form will be returned to your control body to confirm registration and on to DEFRA who, will audit imports/exports to ensure eligibility and return a PO. This will allow the trader to then directly invoice Defra.

Please contact your organic control body to obtain an application form.

### Will there be any further MAS policy changes?

The MAS scheme will be regularly reviewed to ensure outcomes reflect policy intentions.



## Reimbursement of EHC Costs and Invoice Process

### **Before I invoice the Government for the reimbursement of EHC certification costs, are there any steps that my business needs to follow?**

Yes. Refer to [Vet Gateway](#) for the steps you will need to take before submitting invoices for reimbursement.

### **How do I obtain a Purchase Order (PO) for an invoice?**

- After your first EHC request, you will be contacted by APHA (via the email address registered in EHC Online for the EHC) with the details we need to set you up as a supplier
- You will then be provided with a Purchase Order (PO) number via email to the address in EHC Online, which you must include on your invoice. This may take up to 10 business days
- Queries regarding the PO number should be raised with APHA at: [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644

Further guidance on the reimbursement process is available on the [Vet Gateway](#).

### **I would like to claim certification costs. What do I need to include on my invoice for reimbursement by the Government?**

For details of what to include to 31 March 2021, refer to [Vet Gateway](#). From 1 April 2021, refer to the [sample invoice](#).

### **Do I send one invoice per EHC?**

No. You should batch EHC's into a single invoice. You should submit an invoice weekly, or at least monthly. For details of what to include to 31 March 2021, refer to [Vet Gateway](#). From 1 April 2021, refer to the [sample invoice](#).

### **Where do I send the invoice to?**

Invoices should be sent to [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk).

### **How long will it take for my invoice to be reimbursed?**

If all the required information is provided on the invoice, payments should be made into the bank account provided on your invoice, within 10—15 working days from submitting the invoice.

### **How will I know if my invoice has been accepted?**

Usual Government payment timelines apply. If there is an issue with your invoice, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your invoice, you can expect to receive payment into the bank account provided on your invoice, between 10—15 working days from submitting the invoice.



### **How will I know if my invoice has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to register on EHC Online. The email will explain why the invoice cannot be processed and if required, what additional information is needed.

### **I am also dealing with EHCs to NI at the same time as EHCs to other destinations (such as the Republic of Ireland (ROI)). How should I allocate costs and what should I claim?**

You should only invoice for time spent on the NI EHCs (up-to the cap based on your existing charge out rates), for example:

- If you complete six EHCs over a six-hour period and the end destination for all EHCs is NI, and your standard charge out rate is £45 per hour—then a reimbursement claim for each EHC should be made for £45 each. From 1 April you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost
- If you complete six EHCs over a six-hour period, your time was equally spent across the six EHCs, and only two of those EHC's were for NI—using your standard charge out rate (e.g. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for two EHC's at £45 each. 2/6 of your travel time would be apportioned to these EHC's

It is important that you apportion your time accurately, only including the time spent on NI EHCs into your claim. We reserve the right to inspect records to validate claims. From 1 April you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost

- If you complete one EHC, and the end destination is NI, and it takes two hours to complete—using your standard charge out rate (e.g. £45 per hour), you would make a claim for one EHC at £90 each. From 1 April you should include time spent on travel as part of the certification cost

### **I certify for exporting and moving goods from GB-EU, GB-ROI and GB-NI. Can I be reimbursed for certifying from GB to EU, ROI and NI?**

No. The MAS scheme only covers movements from GB where the end destination is NI.

### **Can I claim for the reimbursement of expenses?**

Up to 31 March 2021, reasonable mileage expenses formed part of the additional allowance cost that could be reimbursed, in line with Defra's expenses policy / HMRC rates. From 1 April 2021, mileage costs cannot be claimed; instead certifiers can claim for time spent on travel.

### **Can I claim for the reimbursement of travel time?**

From 1 April 2021, time spent on travel can be claimed for as part of the certification cost.



### **Should I keep records of invoices and any supporting documentation?**

Yes. You should keep full and accurate records for a period of six years. Under the terms of the scheme we retain the right to inspect records to validate claims.

### **Is the MAS reimbursement and invoicing process the same for Local Authorities (LAs) and Official Veterinarians (OVs)?**

Yes. The invoicing process is the same for LAs and OVs.

### **What is the reimbursement cap for EHC certification costs?**

Reimbursements will be subject to a reasonable cap of £150 excl. VAT for non-equine EHCs and £500 excl. VAT for equine EHCs (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse).

From 1 April 2021, certifiers of EHCs can claim for time spent on travel within the total certification cost.

### **Will there be changes to the reimbursement cap for certification costs?**

The Government continues to monitor the performance of MAS to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders. Defra will continue to communicate with certifiers on any changes that may impact them.

### **Is there a specific reimbursement and invoicing process for plants?**

Yes. The process for plants is different because APHA are responsible for conducting these checks (unless you are enrolled in the PHEATS scheme). APHA will not invoice you for issuing a Phytosanitary Certification where the end destination is NI.

### **Is there a specific reimbursement and invoicing process for equines?**

No. The process is the same. The only difference is that the certification cost cap for equines is set higher (£500) to reflect the additional costs incurred.

### **If I have a problem with invoicing or the reimbursement process, who do I contact?**

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

### **Will the MAS helpline answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?**

The MAS contact helpline is not able to answer any queries about reimbursement of certifier costs.

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.



## **Certifiers of EHCs Claiming Time Spent on Travel from 1 April 2021**

### **What date can I start to claim back time spent on travel?**

From and including 1 April 2021, certifiers of EHCs can charge for the time spent on travel, based on their charge out rate.

Please note: The certification completion date entered in EHC Online will dictate whether you are able to claim time spent on travel. If the certification date entered is 1 April 2021 onwards, then time spent on travel can be claimed.

### **Why can certifiers no longer claim mileage?**

There has been a policy change following feedback from the certifier industry. To follow good industry practice, certifiers should claim for time spent on travel rather than miles travelled.

### **How do I work out time spent on travel?**

Certifiers should use their charge out rate for calculating time spent on travel.

### **How do I claim back time spent on travel?**

Certifiers should include time spent on travel on their invoice they submit to the Government for certification reimbursement.

If you are claiming EHC costs refer to the [sample invoice](#) for more details on what to include on your invoice from 1 April 2021. Certifiers must include all the information detailed on the sample invoice to ensure payments are made promptly.

### **Do I have to create two invoices; one for certifying costs and a second for time spent on travel?**

No. Certifiers must submit all PDF invoices on a monthly basis and include all EHCs that have been completed and any claim for time spent on travel.

### **Is the charge for time spent on travel included in the overall certification cost cap?**

Yes. From 1 April time spent on travel can be claimed as part of the overall certificate cost. No mileage can be claimed from this date onwards.

### **From 1 April 2021, will my invoice be rejected if I do not include time spent for travel?**

No. However, if time spent on travel is not included on the invoice, it is assumed that no travel time was required for the certificate and this is the reason for the omission.



**If the EHC was certified on 31 March 2021 but I do not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, can I still claim for mileage?**

Yes. The certification completion date entered on EHC Online will dictate whether you are able to claim mileage or time spent on travel.

For example: If you enter the certification completion date on EHC Online as 31 March but submit your invoice on 1 April you can only claim for mileage.

If you enter the certification completion date on EHC Online as 1 April and submit your invoice on 1 April, you can only claim time spent on travel.

**Will there be further MAS policy changes that impact the reimbursement process?**

The Government continues to monitor the performance of MAS to determine how to best provide ongoing support to traders. Defra will continue to communicate with certifiers on any changes that may impact them.



## MAS Organics

### General

#### **Why have organic certificates of inspections (COIs) been included into MAS?**

Defra has listened to the industry and has responded to their request for the inclusion of some organic costs.

MAS initially focussed on GB-NI Export Health Certification (EHC) requirements, which impacted the largest number of traders, to ensure an immediately smooth process for the largest percentage of agri-products moved into NI. We will continue to review and evolve MAS to ensure it best meets the needs of the market.

Organic certifications require separate marketing standards and certifications, which has made their inclusion more complex. Following supportive conversations with the organic control bodies, we are now able to include the costs of COI requirements for organic agri-food goods.

The Government will reimburse the cost of certification directly to the organic control bodies, ensuring the smooth movement of organic agri-food goods can continue from GB to NI.

#### **What checks do you have in place to ensure that certification bodies are not simply expanding their operations and hiring staff not responsible for completing COIs?**

All reimbursement costs will be subject to review and audit. Defra also reserves the right to cap reimbursement costs up to what it considers are industry norms.

### Traders of Organic Products

#### **I am a trader of organic products, what do I need to do?**

You should apply for the required checks needed for goods to travel from GB to NI in the usual way. You will not be charged for COI costs relating to organic agri-food products moving from GB to NI.

#### **What is the certificate of inspection process I should follow?**

1. Traders of organic agri-food products should continue to use the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([Traces NT](#)) process to apply for COIs
2. Certifiers of COIs must be registered on Traces NT. Traders must contact the certifier (organic control body) to arrange the certification
3. An organic control body receives a trader request to provide a COI via Traces NT
4. The control body completes the request, checking the terms of the license and ensuring there are no suspensions
5. The control body prints, signs and stamps the COI to endorse the request and uploads back to Traces NT
6. The control body sends the original COI to the trader to allow the movement of products to take place



### **What funds are available?**

Certain charges relating to the COI costs will be reimbursed to organic certifiers. We have engaged with each of the organic certifying bodies directly to agree terms. The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT (please note: this cap only applies to what the Government will reimburse).

From 1 August, new costs faced by exporters/importers will be paid by traders and reimbursed by the Government, once traders have demonstrated that they have only imported/exported NI -GB or vice versa. See page 14.

### **How long will the Government cover these costs?**

MAS has been extended to the end of December 2023, at which point the scheme will close. It is constantly monitored and assessed to see how the scheme is working. Defra will continue to review the requirements of both traders and certifiers. This approach means we can monitor how things are operating in order to ensure that we provide people in NI with access to the food they currently enjoy.

## **Organic Control Bodies**

### **What is the process I should follow for a consolidated certificate of inspection (COI) reimbursement?**

Below is a summary of the steps that both the trader and control body are required to follow for the reimbursement of COIs from Defra:

1. Trader applies for the COI from the organic control body; specifying what route the COI will take
2. The control body receives the request through TRACES NT
3. The control body creates the COI for movement of products from GB to NI only
4. The control body records certification details and provides organisation information as evidence for invoicing. The information will be used to validate the COI is for moving goods between GB to NI only
5. The control body sends Defra a monthly invoice, including details of all GB to NI COIs produced within the time period (capped at £25 ex. VAT and £30 incl. VAT. This cap applies to what the Government will reimburse)
6. Defra completes checks on the invoice to ensure goods are moving on the GB-NI route, approves the invoice and the Defra team reimburses the control body

### **How long will reimbursement take to process?**

The payment to an organics control body will be repaid in a timely fashion. Payments should be made within 10 working days but may take up to 30.

### **Are there any pre-requisites I need to complete to ensure a successful reimbursement process?**

The control body may be required to supply organisation details to be set-up as a supplier, this will be a one-time set-up.



**Is there a maximum number of COIs that can be submitted during a period?**

No. There is no limit, but control bodies should ensure all COIs submitted are for products moving from GB to NI only.

**How will I know what information to include on the invoice?**

The invoice should include details of all COIs completed for the GB-NI route for the period since the last invoice was sent and a purchase order number will be provided to be included on the invoice.

**How will I know if any additional information is required on the invoice?**

Defra will email you if any additional information is required before a reimbursement can be granted.

**If our account details change who should we contact?**

Please email Defra at [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk) to make any amendments to your supplier details. This should be in advance of submitting an invoice.

**If we are having any issues with submitting our invoice who should we contact?**

Please email Defra if you have any issues submitting an invoice at: [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk)

**What is the deadline to submit the invoice for the period?**

The deadline to submit the invoice for the period, is the last working day of the third week of the month. E.g. For April, all invoices should be sent to Defra by 23 April. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by Defra in advance.

**How long until we will receive the reimbursed payment?**

Current payment terms are set at 30 days. Reimbursement of costs will be provided within this timeframe. Defra will always endeavour to provide payment in advance of this deadline. Any unforeseen issues with this will be communicated by Defra.

**Where will the reimbursed funds go?**

Defra will reimburse funds to the account details provided during the initial supply set-up. If these details change, it will be the control bodies responsibility to request these are updated.

**What if we make a mistake on the invoice, who should we contact to make the amendments?**

Please email Defra if you identify an error on the invoice submitted at: [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk)

This should be accompanied by an amended version of the invoice. If the invoice has already been submitted and processed the over/or under payment will be applied to the following months invoice.

**What if we create COIs on the day of the deadline?**

COIs created on the day of the deadline should fall into the next month's invoice.

**What will be reimbursed for a COI?**

The current COI cap is set at £25 excl. VAT and £30 incl. VAT. This cap applies to what the Government will reimburse.



HM Government

UK TRANSITION



**When can COIs be reimbursed from?**

COIs completed from the 1 February can be covered by the scheme.

**Who should I contact for invoice queries?**

Please email APHA at [organic.standards@defra.gov.uk](mailto:organic.standards@defra.gov.uk)



# MAS for Certain Types of High-Risk Food and Feed of Non-Animal Origin (HRFNAO)

## General

### What are high risk foods and feed of non-animal origin?

Some foods of non-animal origin are considered high-risk foods and feed of non-animal origin (HRFNAO) because they pose health risks associated with the country of origin. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) are the Competent Authority for these products, and Local Authorities (LAs) are local certifiers.

For more information visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and [FSA](https://www.food.gov.uk) websites.

### Why are HRFNAO in scope?

MAS is constantly monitored and assessed to see how the scheme is working. The scheme has been extended to include HRFNAO following a recent review. We will continue to review the requirements of both traders and certifiers. This approach means we can monitor how things are operating in order to determine how best to provide ongoing support.

### What HRNAO products fall under the MAS extension?

1. Products listed in [Annex 2 of regulation 2019/1793](#)
2. Products originating from countries listed in [Annex 1 of regulation 2020/1158](#)—those at risk due to radioactive elements following the Chernobyl accident

### Why has the MAS scheme been extended to cover these products?

All other HRFNAO products (namely, those that fall under Annex 1 of Regulation 2019/1793) do not require official certification or lab sampling prior to movement from GB to NI, therefore no certification costs will be incurred.

### What is the process to get an official certificate and laboratory analysis report?

A detailed breakdown of the steps the certifier and trader needs to take can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

### When will the Government start paying for certain HRNAO official certificates and laboratory analysis reports?

From 1 April 2021, LAs should invoice the Government for these costs.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice that is submitted by the LA, will dictate whether the LA will claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government or trader.

For example:



- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021 and the invoice is submitted on 31 March 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 1 April 2021 and the invoice is submitted from 1 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs

### **What funds are available?**

The Government will reimburse the cost of certification and lab sampling, against the size of the consignment, directly to the LA. The LA must provide a cost breakdown to support their claims. In some instances, more clarification may be requested before any reimbursement is paid.

### **Will the reimbursement cap limit be reviewed?**

There will be a regular review cycle where a reimbursement cap limit may be set at a future date, based on data received

### **How long will the UK Government cover these costs?**

Following its successful launch and recent review, MAS will continue to support traders. The Government will continue to monitor the performance of the scheme, to determine how best to provide ongoing support to traders.

### **The process for moving HRFNAO from GB to NI is currently manual; will this process change in the future?**

The process for moving HRFNAO from GB to NI is not currently changing, however the Government is exploring options on how to best provide ongoing support to traders.



## Traders of HRFNAO

### What is the process for traders moving HRFNAO from GB to NI?

The high-level process below outlines the steps traders should continue to follow when moving HRFNAO from GB to NI. This process does not currently apply to Authorised Traders (supermarkets and their trusted suppliers). Authorised Traders can continue to move certain HRFNAO products from GB to NI without the need for official certification until at least 1 October 2021. Authorised Traders should continue to use STAMNI compliance declarations forms to move these goods from GB to NI.

- Trader logs onto [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), downloads and completes Part 1 of the relevant official certificate
- Trader sends a request to the LA for lab sampling and certification
- LA sends a certifying officer to visit the site to take samples and send the samples to an official laboratory
- Lab analyses samples and sends the results back to the certifying officer at the LA
- Certifying officer completes Part 2 of the official certificate and provides a copy, returns the lab results, the report, and the completed official certificate to the trader
- The LA sends an invoice to APHA for the reimbursement of lab sampling and official certificate costs
- Trader sends copies of the official certificate and the lab results to the NI importer. Importer pre-notifies the arrival of the goods by completing Part 1 of a Common Health Entry Document ([CHED](#)) on the Trade Control and Expert System NT ([TRACES NT](#))
- The original certificate and lab results must travel with the goods
- On arrival in NI, goods will be subject to documentary checks, and ID and physical checks at the frequency set out in the legislation. The outcome of the checks is recorded on Part 2 of the CHED on TRACES

Visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for guidance on the steps traders should follow or view a HRFNAO process map [here](#).

### Who do I contact if I am incorrectly charged for official certification costs for the HRFNAO in-scope of MAS?

LAs should invoice the Government for official certification costs from the 1 April 2021.

Traders should not be charged for official certificates that have a certification date of 1 April 2021 onwards. Traders should contact their LA to resolve.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice that is submitted by the LA will dictate whether the LA will claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government or trader.

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 1 April 2021 and submits the invoice from 1 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs



## Certifiers of HRFNAO

### What process should LAs follow for the reimbursement of official certificates for certain HRFNAO?

The process for certification of HRFNAO products from GB to NI does not change.

The high-level process below outlines the steps LAs should follow for the reimbursement of official certification costs.

- When a LA receives a request from a trader to inspect HRFNAO goods, they should conduct that assessment as usual
- When the request is received, the LA should, for first time only:
  - Contact APHA to notify them at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk)  
This will allow the APHA to conduct checks to see if the LA has been set up as a supplier for payment to be made later
  - The LA must supply APHA with evidence that they have received an application from a trader to move HRFNAO to NI
  - If they have been set up as a supplier, they will be provided with a unique Purchase Order (PO) number, which should be used on all invoices
  - If they have not been set up as a supplier APHA will contact the LA and request details to be provided to get them set up as a supplier, they will also then be provided with a PO number. To help speed up this process, LAs should complete and return the [Information for Supplier Set-Up form](#) as soon as possible
- Checks on the HRFNAO goods are carried out as usual and certification provided to the trader
- Each month the LA should generate an invoice and submit a PDF version to APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk). This should be for all GB-NI HRFNAO checks they have completed that fall in-scope of MAS
- As part of the information they submit, they will need to provide the following details:
  - PO number provided by APHA
  - Certificate unique reference number
  - Copy of the certificate—including date processed and destination of goods
  - Breakdown of costs—charge out rates, time spent on travel and lab costs
  - Receipt or evidence of lab sampling costs (including a copy of the invoice if not in-house lab costs)
- The invoice/s will then be processed by APHA and checks carried out, with any clarifications sent back to the LA if required
- If all details are supplied correctly and all enquiries have been resolved, payment should be made within 10-15 days



### How do I obtain a Purchase Order (PO) for an invoice?

After your first HRFNAO official certification request, you should contact APHA with the details required to set you up as a supplier at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk)

The information shown in the '[Information Required for Supplier Set-Up](#)' table below is needed to set up all LAs. To help speed up the process, please use the information contained in the table, add this to your **Local Authority letter-headed document** and return as a PDF to the email address above as soon as possible.

In addition, please provide the trader email with the application request as this is the evidence trail to demonstrate the requirements of the certification work.

Once you are set up as a supplier you will be notified of your unique Purchase Order number and further instructions regarding invoicing for reimbursement.

Information Required for Supplier Set-Up	
Local Authority name:	
Site address:	
Tel. no:	
Is payment address the same as site address? If not please provide:	Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
Remittance email address:	
Primary email address:	
Payment method:	BACS
Account name:	
Account number:	
Sort code:	
Roll number:	
Bank name:	
Duns number (if registered):	
VAT registration number:	



### **What do I need to include on my invoice for reimbursement by the Government?**

Please see [sample invoice](#) for the details required on each invoice from 1 April 2021.

Please PDF the invoice and provide evidence supporting the claim, including the certification and lab costs for sampling (including copy of invoice if not in-house lab costs).

### **When should I start submitting invoices for reimbursement of certain HRFNAO official costs to the Government?**

From 1 April 2021, LAs should invoice the Government for these costs.

The date entered under the certified date on the invoice that is submitted by the LA will dictate whether the LA will claim for the reimbursement of official certification costs from the Government or trader. For example:

- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021 and invoice is submitted on 31 March 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 31 March 2021, but the LA does not submit the invoice until 1 April 2021, the LA should invoice the trader for the official certification costs (including lab sampling)
- If the date certified on the invoice is entered as 1 April 2021 and the invoice is submitted from 1 April onwards, the LA should invoice the Government for the reimbursement of the official certification costs

### **How often should I submit an invoice.**

You should submit an invoice for each certification. Please refer to the [sample invoice](#) for details of what to include on the invoice from 1 April 2021. You must send a PDF version of the invoice and include evidence that supports the invoice i.e. the certification, the lab costs for sampling (including copy invoice if not in-house lab costs).

### **Where do I send the invoice to?**

Invoices should be sent to [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk)

### **How long will it take for my invoice to be reimbursed?**

If all the required information is provided on the invoice, payments should be made into the bank account provided on your invoice, within 10—15 working days from submitting the invoice.

### **How will I know if my invoice has been accepted?**

Usual Government payment timelines apply. If there is an issue with your invoice, you will be contacted via email within five working days. If there are no issues with your invoice, you can expect to receive payment into the bank account provided on your invoice, between 10—15 working days from submitting the invoice.



### **How will I know if my invoice has been rejected?**

An email will be sent to the email address that you used to register as a supplier. The email will explain why the invoice cannot be processed and if required, what additional information is needed. We may also telephone if the rejection is because the amount claimed appears excessive.

### **I am also dealing with certifications to NI at the same time as certifications to other destinations (such as the Republic of Ireland (ROI)). How should I allocate costs and what should I claim?**

You should only invoice for time spent on the NI certification (based on your existing charge out rates). Where time is incurred across consignments going to both NI and non-NI destinations (e.g. ROI), then the costs should be proportionally allocated.

### **I certify for exporting and moving goods from GB-EU, GB-ROI and GB-NI. Can I be reimbursed for certifying from GB to EU, ROI and NI?**

No. The MAS scheme only covers movements from GB where the end destination is NI.

### **Should I keep records of invoices and any supporting documentation?**

Yes. You should keep full and accurate records for a period of six years. Under the terms of the scheme we retain the right to inspect records to validate claims.

### **If I have a problem with invoicing or the reimbursement process, who do I contact?**

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.

### **Will the MAS helpline answer questions on invoicing and reimbursements?**

The MAS contact helpline is not able to answer any queries about reimbursement of certifier costs.

Queries regarding the payment of invoices or PO queries should be raised with APHA at [ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk](mailto:ServiceDeliveryVetandExportInvoices@apha.gov.uk) or on +44 (0)20 80265644.