

**Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
Animal Health and Welfare Division**

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| AHWD_TN<br>01/2020 | Covid-19 Change in ITAHC certification process for movement of equidae to EU and EFTA countries. | 2       | 17/09/2020 |

**To: Operators moving equidae to European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Agreement (EFTA) countries using Intra-EU Trade Animal Health Certification.<sup>1</sup>**

**Subject:**

**Covid-19 Certification process for equidae moving to EU and EFTA countries.**

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) veterinary animal health certification is required for movement of equine animals between Ireland and Member States, with the exception of animals moving under the Tripartite Agreement<sup>1</sup>.

Processing requests for an Intra-Trade Animal Health certificate (ITAHC) requires supporting documentation from the equine operator and Private Veterinary Practitioner.

The ongoing Corona Virus (COVID-19) crisis represents an unprecedented challenge for Member States to fully conduct official control activities in accordance with EU legislation.

The European Commission has issued guidance to Member States to enable more flexible certification operations, in order to minimise human interactions and travel requirements.

Consequently, DAFM Live Trade Division has agreed with Regional Veterinary Office (RVO) colleagues the following protocol, effective as of **April 20th, 2020**:

Applications for intra-trade health certification will only be accepted from equine operators who are **registered on the TRACES system** and **registered on CCS for bill payment** (Guidance in **Appendix 1**).

**Note:** Applications for certification will **not** be accepted by RVO without TRACES Part 1 completion.

Each equine operator must **register on the DAFM CCS system** **before** inputting certification details into TRACES.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tripartite Agreement facilitates movement of high health status animals from Ireland to UK without animal health certification and from Ireland to France using a commercial document (Docom).

### Protocol for Exporters:

1. Exporter must have premises available where horses may be unloaded and examined if necessary. Stabling is also required in the event that a horse needs to be removed from the consignment. These arrangements must be agreed with the RVO SVI **in advance** of submission of TRACES Part 1 to RVO.
2. Exporter must complete Part I ('Consignment') of ITAHC online on TRACES (Guidance in **Appendix I**) and submit the correctly completed Part I to the Regional Veterinary Office.
3. As a **minimum** of **3 working days** is required for the RVO to process applications, adequate notice must be given by each operator to enable RVO teams allocate duties to personnel.
4. In accordance with Article 8 of Council Directive (EC) 2009/156, the ITAHC must be signed **within 48 hours** of, or no later than the last working day before, departure from Ireland. (Latter provision enables certification e.g. on Friday for Bank Holiday sailing).
5. Notify **local RVO** team by e.mail (**Appendix 2**) when Part 1 of ITAHC completed.

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Notification to include:

- TRACES-assigned certificate reference number.
  - Time and location of loading onto vehicle.
  - Port/Airport of departure.
  - Date and time of sailing/flight.
  - Details of airline/ferry operator.
6. When the equine operator is completing TRACES information online, if the consignee details are not already pre-loaded in the system, new consignee details may be entered which are validated by the competent authority in the Member state of destination. It is **not** necessary for this validation to be completed before RVO complete the ITAHC.
  7. Retain record of TRACES reference number and include in communications with DAFM.
  8. Arrange for Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP) to inspect the animal/s and certify health requirements, to enable RVO to sign certification.
  9. Details of one or more horses may be included in the PVP certificate.
  10. Although details of one or more horses may be included in PVP certificate, **each registered horse** requires an **individual** TRACES ITAHC.
  11. PVP carries out inspection of consignment (Template PVP certificate in **Appendix 3**).

**Note:** This is a revised version of previous PVP certificate with additional requirement for PVP to confirm verification of equine identification.

12. RVO will retain PVP certification and complete ITAHC on TRACES system, print, sign and stamp certificate to accompany animal/s during journey.
13. Certificate printed in English is signed by DAFM veterinary officer, and may be printed in the language of Member State of destination or transit Member State/s, if requested by equine operator (this version is not signed).
14. **Note:** ITAHC is valid for **10 days** from date of issue.
15. RVO SVI may, on a risk-determined basis, determine that it is not necessary to conduct on-site inspection to observe animals for particular consignments.  
In such cases, the equine operator will be required to bring to the RVO, by appointment at an agreed time, and adhering to all HSE guidelines regarding COVID 19:
  - Valid passport for each horse.
  - Original, signed, dated and stamped PVP Health Certification.

RVO (S)VI will complete documentary verification check verifying there is a valid passport with valid supporting PVP certification for each horse and details entered correctly in TRACES, before issuing TRACES certification.

**Note:** This documentary verification check must take place on the **same day** as inspection and certification by PVP.

16. Provision of these flexible arrangements in relation to DAFM physical examination of animals and reviewing hard copy documentation in order to manage equine ITAHC operations during Covid-19 will be based on operator compliance history. This flexible service may be withdrawn in the event that non-compliances are identified. Any exporter with a history of previous non conformances must have all consignments examined by a VI.
17. **Fees:** Current DAFM Veterinary Fee for equine export certification is **€12.50 per horse**. In light of Covid-19 restrictions, it will not be possible to collect cash/cheque payments for certification. Each RVO will forward, on a **fortnightly** basis to Animal Health and Welfare Division a summary of certificates issued, and sales invoices will issue accordingly.

**Additional Notes:**

- Regular equine transporters are now registered for TRACES and CCS.  
If you need to confirm your status, please contact [Horseexports@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:Horseexports@agriculture.gov.ie)
- It is the responsibility of the equine operator to ensure equidae are correctly identified.
- **Note:** When applying to the RVO for certification, the keeper must notify DAFM if moving the horse/s for the purpose of slaughter.
- During Covid-19, it is the responsibility of the equine operator to check with Member State of destination and in-transit countries if applicable, before finalising travel arrangements.

**End.**