Animal and Plant Health Agency

ET187 Information for Official Veterinarians certifying Export Health Certificates

October 2026

Change notice

The following changes have been made to Version 4:

- Hyperlinks to the guidance in the OV Export Instructions on the Improve International website have been updated in the following sections of this document:
    - Completion of the Export Health Certificate
    - Countersignature of certificates by APHA Veterinarians
    - Guidance on the RCVS Principles of Certification
    - Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary)
- The Return of unused or incomplete certificates section has been removed.

Overview

An application has been received requesting export health certification to be issued, as detailed in the enclosed application form received from the exporter.

A list of the associated documents enclosed with this Export Health Certificate (EHC) can be viewed at the following link on the GOV.UK website: https://www.gov.uk/export-health-certificates

Completion of the Export Health Certificate

As the nominated Official Veterinarian (OV), you are required to examine the consignment in accordance with the OV instructions available on the Improve International website at the following address and the requirements on the EHC and its accompanying Notes for Guidance (NFG): https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=6979fcab51c8d

Once you have assured yourself that the conditions required by the EHC have been fully met, then you may sign, stamp and date the certificate, in a colour other than black.

After completion of the EHC, follow the Post Certifying Procedures: https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=6979fcab51c8d

The NFG do not require photocopying and should be kept with your copy of the EHC; they should not accompany the EHC.

Support documents

In order to complete the EHC you may have needed to refer to support documents such as written declarations or veterinary certificates. These documents or photocopies of them must be retained by you and filed with your own certified copy of the EHC to which they apply. In some cases the importing country requires that certain support documents are attached to the health certificate, in these cases the EHC or NFG will state which documents are required.

Provision of pre-export certification (if applicable)

As the nominated OV, you should arrange to carry out the pre-export health certification duties in accordance with the following instructions below.

It is accepted that, at the time you are required to sign the pre-export health certificate, certain sections of the health attestation may not be certifiable e.g. requirements of laboratory test results or the final fitness to travel check.

The pre-export health certificate should be completed as far as possible at the time of signing.

Where paragraphs of the pre-export health certificate cannot be certified, you should insert ‘To Be Completed at a later date’ and then sign, date and stamp with your OV stamp in the margin, without obscuring any of the registered text. You may wish to put a note by these paragraphs offering an explanation as to why you have done this, such as “samples taken on….” or “outside agreed timeframe of….”

A pre-export health certificate must not be used to accompany a consignment at the time of export but may be used as a support document for the final EHC. The final EHC must be completed in it’s entirely with no unauthorised deletions.

Countersignature of certificates by APHA veterinarians

Some certificates require endorsement by an APHA Veterinarian after signature by an OV. Where countersignature of an EHC is required the certifying OV or exporter should submit a Request for APHA Veterinarian Countersignature of an Export Health Certificate (ET145) to the Centre for International Trade – Carlisle to make arrangements for the countersignature to be carried out by an APHA Veterinarian without delay.

Guidance on countersignature procedures can be found on the Improve International website: https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=6979fcab51c8d

Guidance on the RCVS principles of certification

Guidance on the RCVS Principles of Certification can be found in the OV instructions on the Improve International website at the following address:
https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=671bbd64290ba

Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary)

As the nominated certifying OV it is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct Official Controls Qualification (Veterinary) (OCQ(V)) entitlement before signing any official certification and that you are registered as an OV with Improve International. Guidance on OV authorisation and Improve international can be found in the OV instructions on the Improve International website at the following address:
https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=671bbd64290ba

Guidance on the OCQ(V) entitlements can be found in the OV instructions on the Improve International website at the following address:
https://www.improve-ov.com/instructions/instructions.php?ta=671bbd64290ba

Please contact CITC, at the address below, if you have any queries relating to this export health certification.

Animal and Plant Health Agency
Centre for International Trade
Eden Bridge House
Lowther Street
Carlisle
CA3 8DX

Tel: 03000 200 301

Contact APHA using the online contact form.

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APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.