

Minimum operating standards for UK approved passport issuing organisations

March 2016



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**
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Introduction

Purpose

- 1.1.1. This document sets out the minimum standards that horse passport issuing organisations (“PIOs” or “organisations”) must meet to enable the efficient and effective operation of the equine identification regime. It has been prepared in partnership with approved PIOs, the Food Standards Agency, Local Authorities and the Equine Sector Council Steering Group.
- 1.1.2. Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/262 was adopted on 11th September 2014 and comes into effect throughout the EU from 1st January 2016. [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 2015/262](#)
- 1.1.3. In the UK a phased approach to implementation of the regulation is being taken. This document explains the minimum requirements needed to enable the effective and efficient operation of the regime from 1 January 2016. It will be updated at key points throughout 2016 as further changes come in. Full guidance will be provided on how PIOs interface with the new UK Central Equine Database in 2016.
- 1.1.4. This document will be reviewed regularly and the CA may make any changes which are reasonable and essential to ensure effective operation of the equine identification regime. As part of this, we welcome feedback on this document. Any changes will be the subject of appropriate consultation with organisations and a reasonable period of time for adjustment will be allowed.

Terminology

- 1.2.1. For the purpose of this document:
- 1.2.2. ‘horse(s)’ means wild or domesticated soliped mammals of all species within the genus *Equus* of the family *Equidae*, and their crosses.
- 1.2.3. ‘2016 EU Regulations’ refers to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/262
- 1.2.4. For other definitions, such as for ‘holding’, please refer to Article 2 of the 2016 EU Regulations.
- 1.2.5. The system for issuing horse passports and maintaining the equine identification regime is administered by the CA (Competent Authority) in each of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The CA for your organisation will depend on

which territory your registered office is located in. The contact details for each of the CAs are set out at the start of this document.

- 1.2.6. For the purposes of this document, every day from Monday to Friday is counted as a working day. Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays are not counted as working days.

Application

- 1.3.1 This document takes effect from 1st January 2016. It replaces the Minimum operating standards for UK approved passport issuing organisations which came into force on the 1st February 2014.

Passport Records

- 2.1.1. Organisations must act in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 1998](#)
- 2.1.2. Records must be accurate, clear, up to date and readily available.
- 2.1.3. An immediately-searchable, fully computerised database must be held by each organisation, consisting of at least the fields required by the 2016 EU Regulations Article 38(1). The database must also record :
- a) Any evidence of modification, tampering or fraud, including section II (and pre-2016 Section IX) anomalies (Note format is acceptable).
 - b) Details of any passports returned to owners following the death of a horse. These must include the name and contact details of the person to whom the passport was returned as well as the date of return (Note format is acceptable).
 - c) Details of any pages previously added to the passport subsequent to its first issue, including date, number of pages and contents (Note format is acceptable).
 - d) Details of any temporary documents issued, including issue and expiry dates (Note format is acceptable).
 - e) Details of the issue of any substitute issued for a damaged passport (Note format is acceptable).
 - f) Details of re-issue of document, noting the reason for reissue (Note format is acceptable).
- 2.1.4. Records must be kept for at least 35 years or until at least 2 years from the date of death of the animal concerned. Where exact copies or scans of paper records,

including signatures, are held on electronic record in such a way that they can be easily retrieved and printed for enforcement authorities then there is no need to retain the paper record.

Passports

- 3.1.1. All passports must follow the example layout set out in annex 1 Part 1; and must follow the extra security and binding requirements set out in annex 1 Part 2 of the 2016 EU Regulations. Minor formatting variations are permitted only if necessary to improve the clarity of the passport.
- 3.1.2. A title page may be included ahead of Section I with the UELN, horse's name, organisation's name and any extra security features included.
- 3.1.3. Section I, Part A must be type-printed.
- 3.1.4. Section I, Part A must be sealed with transparent laminate after the information has been entered unless that section has been printed using a method that prevents alteration after the information was entered. Any alteration in colour or markings after the passport was issued should be recorded in Section I, Part C. The format of Section I, Part C may be expanded upon to better enable this.
- 3.1.5. Additional pages for the statutory Sections may be included as required to ensure sufficient pages are present for the ongoing use of the passport.
- 3.1.6. For registered horses if necessary an extended pedigree may be included as a single page extension to Section V, which must follow immediately after the Certificate of Origin and be marked 'Section V, Pedigree'.
- 3.1.7. Space for noting registrations in other studbooks may be included underneath the Certificate of Origin in Section V.
- 3.1.8. Additional pages containing non statutory information may be included in passports for **registered horses** only if they are:
 - a) Positioned at the end of the passport after the statutory pages
 - b) Clearly separated from the statutory pages
 - c) Clearly identified as non-statutory pages.
- 3.1.8. Passports issued before 1 January 2016 are still valid and do not need to be replaced.
- 3.1.9. To complement information already available on CA websites, organisations **must** provide accurate information outlining all of the legal responsibilities of horse

owners in relation to passports. This must be available on the organisation's website, and be provided with any documentation sent to horse owners by an organisation, for example when returning a passport after updating. It is also recommended that this information is provided within the passport itself, printed on the inside of the passport cover or a loose leaflet. Organisations are responsible for ensuring that the information provided is complete and up to date.

- 3.1.10. Organisations must keep a detailed record of any changes to the appearance of the passports that they issue over time so they can assist in the identification of fraud. They must retain sample copies of all passport variations.
- 3.1.11. A sample passport must be provided if requested by the relevant CA.
- 3.1.12. In order to help verify any changes to a passport, organisations must keep a detailed record of any changes to the format of their official stamp or embossing stamp and the colour of any ink used with it.
- 3.1.13. Organisations needing to make changes to meet the requirements of Regulation 2015/262 should note that a number of PIOs offer services such as binding and passport production that may assist. You should contact other CA approved organisations to establish what services are available.

Issuing passports

- 3.2.1. Documented operating procedures must be in place for the issuing, updating and replacement of passports that reflect the regulation and this document. These procedures must be properly understood by all staff.
- 3.2.2. The procedures described in section 3.2.1 must also include guidance that where a horse is of a specific breed, its owner must be informed about the appropriate breed society.
- 3.2.3. For identification only passports, the organisation cannot verify the breeding of the horse and Section V (Certificate of Origin) must not be completed. Passport applicants requiring the inclusion of breeding details should be referred to an appropriate recognised breed society.
- 3.2.4. Organisations must issue an application pack within 7 days of it being requested. With the exception of Section I parts A and B, a blank passport or part thereof must not be sent as an application form.
- 3.2.5. If you are maintaining pre-printed stocks of passport pages that include Sections I-III then these must have serial numbers applied to them. The format used is at the discretion of the organisation, but should avoid any potential confusion with a UELN or microchip number.

- 3.2.6. Passports must contain the following Sections:
- a) Breed/Registered passports – at least Sections I to X. Section XI may be included
 - b) ID only passports – at least Sections I to IV. Sections V to XI may be included but information should not be entered in Section V.
- 3.2.7. A passport cannot be issued unless the following sections have been completed:
- a) Section I and IV for all passports; additionally
 - b) Section V for Breed/Registered passports only; and
 - c) Section II if applicable for all passports.
- 3.2.8. Before issue appropriate checks must be made that information provided and entered into the passport is correct and that a passport does not already exist. This must include checking the existing records held by the organisation by transponder number. Where it is claimed that a horse is of a specific breed and the passport production deadlines in paragraph 3.3.4 of this document have been exceeded, enquiries must be made with organisations for that breed.
- 3.2.9. For rescued horses it is accepted that information on the existence of a passport as required in paragraph 3.2.7 of this document may not be available. Where the organisation is satisfied that the horse was genuinely rescued, a replacement or duplicate passport must be produced in accordance with the 2016 EU Regulations Article 29 or 32 as appropriate, and in both instances signed out of the human food chain in Part II of Section II of the passport.
- 3.2.10. Organisations must make all reasonable checks to verify the accuracy and authenticity of information provided on passport applications.
- 3.2.11. In the UK the transponder must be implanted by a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). The passport application form must also be signed by a member of the RCVS to confirm the information provided is correct.
- 3.2.12. The organisation is responsible for making reasonable checks to ensure that any transponder number and silhouette provided in an application is completed correctly, legibly and the application has been signed by a member of the RCVS¹. The organisation can check membership using the RCVS [database](#).

¹ Note that the silhouette can be completed by an appropriate person authorised to do so by the organisation, so long as the location of the transponder is marked and the silhouette as a whole confirmed by the vet.

- 3.2.13. Where an organisation is issuing a passport to an animal kept in another EU member state they must comply with the domestic requirements of that member state.
- 3.2.14. Upon identification, the organisation is obliged to issue a horse with a Unique Equine Life Number in accordance with instructions in Annex 1 of this document.
- 3.2.15. For consistency with correspondence deadlines outlined in 4.4.4, an organisation must acknowledge receipt of an application for a horse passport within 15 working days. This acknowledgement must state a likely timescale for passport issue. If a passport is to be issued in less than 15 working days, then acknowledgement is not necessary.
- 3.2.16. Upon receipt of a correctly completed application form and where necessary completion of the breeding confirmation process, the organisation must normally issue a passport within 20 working days. Note that organisations are not required to issue a passport if they have not received the required fees.
- 3.2.17. It is accepted that in exceptional circumstances, such as where an application is suspected to be fraudulent, then more time may be necessary to issue a passport.

Duplicates and replacements for late applications and lost passports

- 3.3.1. In all cases a new application will need to be completed with an RCVS vet confirming that all the details describing the horse on the application form are correct before a duplicate or replacement passport can be issued.
- 3.3.2. Before issue the organisation must stamp and sign all replacement and duplicate passports (Part II of Section II) to declare that the horse is not intended for human consumption. This includes passports issued to replace pre-2016 passports without a Section IX.
- 3.3.3. Organisations must stamp the front page, silhouette and, if present, Section V of any duplicate or replacement passport as “duplicate” or “replacement” as appropriate prior to its issue.

Late Passport Applications

- 3.3.4. Passport applications received after the later of six months from the animal’s birth or the 31st of December in the year of its birth are late applications.

- 3.3.5. If a late passport application is for a horse which is eligible for immediate inclusion in a studbook, then a duplicate passport may be produced by a relevant breed society for that animal.
- 3.3.6. If the horse is not eligible for immediate entry into a studbook, then a replacement passport can be produced by any UK PIO designated to produce passports for breeding and production animals.

Lost Passports

- 3.3.7. Where the passport is lost and the identity of the animal can be established through its implanted microchip number or a properly completed outline diagram a duplicate passport must be produced by:
- For breeding and production horses resident in the UK, any UK PIO designated to produce passports for breeding and production animals. Horses resident in another EU member state must have their duplicate passports produced by a PIO in that member state.
 - For registered horses, either a breed society that maintains a studbook that the horse has been entered or registered in, or is eligible for entry; or by the national branch of an international organisation or association which manages horses for competition or racing.
 - In all cases the original UELN must be recorded in the new passport.
- 3.3.8. Where the existing identity cannot be established then a replacement passport must be issued.

Table summarising type of passport to issue for late or lost passport applications

Situation	Registered Horse	Breeding and Production Horse	Horse whose identity cannot be established through its microchip
Late application	Duplicate passport (see paragraph 3.3.5)	Replacement passport (see paragraph 3.3.6)	Replacement passport (see paragraph 3.3.6)
Lost passport	Duplicate passport (see paragraph 3.3.7.b)	Duplicate passport (see paragraph 3.3.7.a)	Replacement passport (see paragraph 3.3.8)

Reissuing Passports

- 3.4.1. A passport may be reissued in the following situations:
- a) Passport is damaged but remains fully bound, clearly legible in all parts, free of any signs of fraud and a new passport is needed to ensure its ongoing security;
 - b) ID only passport needs upgrading to registered passport but the original passport cannot be adapted;
 - c) Minor errors were made in the issue of the original passport which need to be corrected.
- 3.4.2. The passport does not need to be issued as a replacement or duplicate and the original food chain status must be recorded in the passport. The original passport must be destroyed. If required elements from the old passport excepting Sections I-V (or their equivalent in pre-2016 issued passports) can be removed and returned to the owner for safe keeping.

Updating passports

- 3.5.1. Owners are required to keep the information in a horse's passport up to date, including ownership details and foodchain status. The regulation allows owners to update information on UK issued Passports through any UK PIO. Defra is considering how this new requirement can best be met, however until the CED is operational PIOs must not update any passport that they did not originally issue except those issued by PIOs no longer in existence or were issued by an organisation outside of the UK.
- 3.5.2. Passports issued in another EU Member State for horses kept on a UK holding can be updated by any UK PIO which must notify the change of record to the central database of the Member State where the animal was born. We hope that when the CED is operational PIOs will be able to send update notifications to other Member State databases via the CED but cannot confirm this until later in 2016. Contact details for other EU Member State central databases can be found here:
- http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/identification/equine/ms_info_en.htm
- 3.5.3. Any updates to a passport must be endorsed and dated with the organisation's official stamp. Embossing stamps are acceptable so long as they produce a clear stamp.
- 3.5.4. If a stamp is used to endorse a sticker then the stamp must overlap the label onto the page. This is with the exception of updating a horse's name and ownership

details, where the organisation's stamp may be solely on the sticker so long as that sticker contains the animal's UELN and transponder number.

- 3.5.5. If alterations are made to a passport, it must be clear what these mean for the food chain status of the animal. Ambiguous or confusing markings in Section II or the pre-2016 Section IX will lead to the animal being deemed unfit for human consumption.
- 3.5.6. Changes of ownership notified to an organisation must be entered into Section IV, or for older passports Section III of the passport where it has been provided.
- 3.5.7. Ownership details must not be removed from passports or deleted from records, except where the entire record is being destroyed as per section 2.1.4.
- 3.5.8. If a transponder is inserted into a horse previously identified before July 2009, this becomes part of the animal's identity. The organisation must confirm that the transponder was inserted in line with the requirements of 3.2.11 and record the change on the passport and database.
- 3.5.9. A new passport must be issued where it is not possible to add this information to an existing passport. The existing food chain status must be recorded in the new passport.
- 3.5.10. Where an organisation is satisfied that the updated information provided is correct they must normally complete any passports updates, including change of ownership, within 10 working days of receipt of all necessary information and fees. Database records must also be updated. .
- 3.5.11. It is accepted that in exceptional circumstances more time may be necessary to update a passport. If the organisation is unable to update ownership within 10 working days and there is no suspicion of fraud, a temporary document must be issued which conforms fully to the layout proscribed in Annex III of the 2016 EU Regulations.

Failure to locate a transponder

- 3.6.1. This section applies to horses identified after 30th June 2009 and those horses identified before this date that have been implanted with a transponder which has been incorporated into their identification whose transponder cannot be located.
- 3.6.2. Where a horse can still be identified through a properly completed silhouette, a veterinary surgeon must implant a new transponder and complete the relevant sections of a new application form. The appropriate original issuing organisation may then issue a duplicate passport as described in section 3.3.7.

- 3.6.3. Where the horse cannot be identified, then a replacement document may be issued as described in section 3.3.8. This can be carried out by any organisation designated by the relevant competent authority, not just the original issuing organisation.
- 3.6.4. In all cases where a passport is updated or issued for a horse whose original transponder cannot be located, the passport must be signed and stamped (in Section II Part II) by the organisation to declare the horse as not intended for human consumption.
- 3.6.5. In all cases where a passport is updated or issued for a horse whose original transponder cannot be located, both the valid passport and the organisation's database must display both old and new transponder numbers.
- 3.6.6. In all cases where a replacement or duplicate passport is issued for a horse whose original transponder cannot be located, the original passport must be returned to the organisation. The organisation must invalidate this document as described in sections 3.9.1, 3.9.2 and 3.9.4 of this document and must not return it to the owner or keeper.

Pre-2016 Passports without a section IX

- 3.7.1. Where the organisation's records indicate that a passport issued before 10 June 2004 has not been updated to add in the required Section IX, the organisation must send a letter informing the owner that they need to update that passport as it is no longer valid.
- 3.7.2. Upon its return, the organisation must issue a new passport in accordance with Article 29 or 32 of the 2016 EU Regulations and in either instance sign the animal out of the human food chain in Part II of Section II of the passport.

Temporary documents

- 3.8.1. Temporary documents must only be issued in exceptional circumstances. They must not be issued where fraud is suspected.
- 3.8.2. To comply with the 2016 EU Regulations Article 24(1) temporary documents must not be issued unless the organisation holds the full passport for the animal concerned. The full passport must be retained by the organisation until either the owner returns the temporary document or the temporary document expires. After this, the organisation should return the full passport to the horse's owner.

- 3.8.3. Temporary documents must be clearly printed with all information required by Annex III of 2016 EU Regulations including a clear expiry date not exceeding 45 days from issue.
- 3.8.4. Temporary documents must be stamped with the organisation's official stamp and contain a watermark, embossed stamp or hologram. This is to protect against fraud and aid in the identification of valid documents.
- 3.8.5. Details of any temporary document issued by an organisation must be noted on its database as described in section 2.1.3.d).
- 3.8.6. Organisations must contact owners within 10 working days of the temporary document's expiry date if the owner has failed to return it. This is to minimise the risk of fraud by reducing the number of expired temporary documents in circulation.
- 3.8.7. Organisations must inform customers issued with a temporary documents that:
- a) If a horse's permanent passport is not immediately available to a veterinary surgeon, medicine that would exclude that horse from the food chain cannot be administered.
 - b) Horses may not be moved between countries or to slaughter on a temporary document.

Invalidating passports

- 3.9.1. When an organisation is notified of the death of one of the horses on its database, this notification must be recorded on that database.
- 3.9.2. Upon receipt of the passport of a deceased or slaughtered horse the organisation must check the passport for consistency with existing records and other signs of fraud as outlined in the section on Detecting and preventing fraud. The passport must then be invalidated by clearly tamper proof stamping it as "invalid" on every page or punching a hole of appropriate diameter through the top right hand corner of every page.
- 3.9.3. The passports of deceased or slaughtered animals may be returned to the horse's owner or keeper on request following invalidation. A detailed record must be kept of all such passports as described in section 2.1.3.b) of this document.
- 3.9.4. If a passport is not returned to the owner or keeper as described in Sections I, II, III and IX (or for pre 2016 passports Sections I, III and IX) it must be kept for 2 years after death and then destroyed. As an exception to section 2.1.4 of this document, other sections whose information is held on the organisation's database may be

destroyed immediately without the need for the invalidation mentioned in section 3.9.2.

Working with CAs, enforcement agencies and horse owners

General Obligation

4.1.1 All organisations must cooperate with the CA. Failure to do so may result in suspension or withdrawal of approval to issue passports, and for breed societies suspension or withdrawal of recognition under Commission Decision 92/353/EEC.

Contact Details

4.2.1. Each organisation must have a single mobile or landline telephone number and single corporate email address. These contact points must be accessible by several members of staff. Calls or emails may be referred or automatically transferred to another member of staff if necessary.

4.2.2. Organisations must publish the names and contact phone numbers of their officers on their website.

4.2.3. The contact details mentioned in 4.2.1 must not change without exceptional reason. They must not be regularly altered and must remain the same regardless of staff absences. The relevant CA must be informed prior to any such change using the contact details at the start of this document.

4.2.4. Organisations must act in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 in all contact.

Dealing with enquiries from CAs and enforcement agencies

4.3.1. Organisations must provide their respective CA with details of their registrar or secretary and inform that CA of any change to these details using the contact information on page 2 of this document.

4.3.2. Where an organisation receives a request for personal data from an enforcement agency for example Food Standards Agencies, Local Authorities, Animal and Plant

Health Agency, Police, DARD Veterinary Service Enforcement Branch or the courts it must consider the request under the [Data Protection Act 1998](#)² and, in particular, consider whether the exemption provided for in section 29 of the DPA (data processed for the prevention of crime etc) applies. Where the criteria of the exemption are met, PIOs would be expected to release the information requested directly to the requestor. Please note that organisations are expected to work in support of the CA and enforcement authorities in enabling the efficient and effective operation of the regime.

- 4.3.3. Organisations are expected to respond to information requests of any format from CAs and enforcement bodies within a maximum of 2 working days for urgent requests or 5 working days for standard requests. Where the requested information is not available a nil return must be sent so that the CA or enforcement body is aware that the request has been received and acted upon.
- 4.3.4. Organisations must be able to provide any non-personal data that can be reasonably expected to CAs when requested and within a specified time frame.
- 4.3.5. Under the existing European legislative framework, organisations can be required to provide information to any CA designated Central Equine Database in a format and timescale that is in accordance with any written notice served by the CA.
- 4.3.6. Organisations should be able to deal with most passport enquiries. However, if they are unable to do so, enquiries from members of the public should be referred to the CA public helpline. Contact details are provided at the start of this document.

Dealing with general enquiries

- 4.4.1. Organisations must be able to answer the telephone number in paragraph 4.2.1 between the hours of 10am and 4pm every working day as a minimum. During this time, the telephone must be staffed by a trained individual who has access to the organisation's database and is able to supply information as requested³.
- 4.4.2. An answering service must be available during working hours, which if not operable outside of working hours includes a recorded message informing callers when office hours are.
- 4.4.3. All messages left on answering services must be returned within 1 working day of receipt.

² Information on how to handle personal data, including how to process [Section 29 requests](#), is available from the [Information Commissioners Office](#).

³ To help meet this requirement, organisations may create a shared database.

- 4.4.4. Written correspondence including emails must be answered within a maximum of 15 working days of receipt. In exceptional circumstances where this deadline cannot be met, a holding reply explaining the reason for delay must be sent within 5 working days.
- 4.4.5. Each organisation must have written complaints and appeals procedures that are displayed publicly on the organisations website. They must include at least:
- a) That written acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint or appeal will be provided by return;
 - b) Written confirmation to be provided within 15 working days of how the complaint is to be dealt with;
 - c) Written confirmation of the outcome, including any procedures to appeal that outcome.

Detecting and preventing fraud

- 5.1.1. Organisations must carry out reasonable checks to ensure that passports and passport applications are valid and correct. This must include checking applications and returned passports against existing records and sample passports for consistency.
- 5.1.2. Organisations must be aware of and where appropriate act upon signs of fraud, which might include:
- a) Unusual volumes of registrations.
 - b) Where foals are declared as born outside the normal foaling season.
 - c) Where a number of application forms are submitted by the same breeder or agent for horses purporting to be born on or around the same date.
 - d) Where a passport has been issued by an organisation that is not approved by the CA.
 - e) Where there are any inconsistencies on passports or change of detail applications, particularly where a passport is purporting to have been issued by an organisation that has lost its approval or a passport has been returned following slaughter.
 - f) Signs of unofficial changes including handwritten amendments, variation in paper quality, changes that have not been stamped by the organisation or bindings that are incomplete or faulty.

- g) Evidence that veterinary information has been altered by someone that is not a vet. This could include evidence of applications being altered after a vet's signature; unfamiliar stamps claiming to be those of specific veterinary practices or variations in the signature of a particular veterinary surgeon. Organisations can check whether a person is registered with the RCVS using their [database](#).
- h) The addition of additional or subsequent microchip to a horse.
- i) The return following slaughter of an original passport where a duplicate passport has been issued to the same animal.

5.1.3. The list of signs of fraud is intended as a guide. It is accepted that for particular groups of horses, practices outlined in 5.1.2.a), b) and c) may be commonplace and therefore not warrant noting. Similarly, there may be indicators that particular organisations feel should be checked for as part of their own practices.

5.1.4. Any evidence of modification, tampering or fraud including Section IV (and pre2016 Section IX) anomalies must be noted on the organisation's database as described in Section 2.1.3.a).

5.1.5. If a passport is identified as suspect the organisation should immediately refer it to their horse passports enforcement authority⁴.

5.1.6. If an organisation has evidence that an individual or group may be involved in horse passport fraud it must report this immediately to its enforcement authority⁴.

Breaches of the regulations

5.2.1. While Local Authorities are responsible for enforcing the Regulations they are under increasing pressure to prioritise their workloads and decisions on how this responsibility is exercised are made locally. Organisations are encouraged to liaise with their Local Authority to discuss and agree how to work together. Until new domestic legislation is in place Local Authorities are only able to take an advisory approach to breaches of the EU regulation.

5.2.2. Any referrals may be by secure telephone, email or post. Care must be taken to ensure that all such communications comply with the [Data Protection Act 1998](#).

⁴ In England, Scotland and Wales the enforcement authority is the Local Authority for the area in which the organisation operates. Enforcement is usually managed by the Trading Standards Service or Environmental Health Department. In Northern Ireland the enforcement authority is DARD Veterinary Service Enforcement Branch who can be contacted via the DARD helpline on 0300 200 7852.

5.2.3. Upon receipt of information the Local Authority will record it and assess whether enforcement action is appropriate. The information will, if necessary, be passed to the Local Authority for the area in which the offence may have taken place. Follow up action by Local Authorities will be taken in line with the authority's enforcement policy.

Derogated populations

- 6.1.1. Rump stickers must only be issued to animals being moved from designated areas as previously set out in the horse passport regulations⁵⁶.
- 6.1.2. Organisations must keep a record of the name and contact details of the owner of any horse that they issue a rump sticker for. If the rump sticker is to be applied on the sale of a horse, these details should be those of the buyer.
- 6.1.3. Organisations must keep detailed records to include details of the authorised person issued with the sticker; issue date; date of sticker application to the horse, sticker unique identification number and where relevant the name of the intended slaughterhouse and microchip number⁶.
- 6.1.4. Organisations must monitor whether the animals have been slaughtered or a valid passport application has been submitted.

Business continuity

- 7.1.1 Organisations must have documented procedures in place to ensure that the expectations in this document can continue to be met in the event of disruption to business. This must include back-ups for electronic databases and arrangements for staff cover in the event of absences or holiday. In the case of extreme weather conditions, these procedures might include provisions for a member of staff to take calls from home or to place a notice on the organisation's website.

⁵ For England this refers to the [The Horse Passport \(England\) Regulations 2009 Article 12\(1\)](#); For Scotland [The Horse Identification \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009 Article 19](#); For Wales [The Horse Identification \(Wales\) Regulations 2009 Article 18](#). Organisations in Scotland cannot issue rump stickers.

⁶Note that in Wales horses sold to private homes(i.e. not for slaughter) at any derogation sale must be micro-chipped before they leave the sale premises.

Business activity

7.2. Organisations must be actively trading.

Procedures on ceasing trading

- 7.3.1. If an organisation ceases trading it is important that passports issued by them can still be maintained. It is therefore a requirement that all organisations have a clear documented plan in place for transfer of the passport maintenance part of their business to another approved organisation should they cease trading or lose their CA approval. This plan must clearly identify the organisation nominated to take over passport management and put arrangements in place to ensure a smooth transfer of records.
- 7.3.2. Organisations must inform the CA for their territory of which organisation they have nominated for the purposes of section 7.3.1 and notify the CA if the nominated organisation changes. If, at a later time, the nominated organisation is for whatever reason no longer able to take on that work then another organisation must be nominated in its place.
- 7.3.3. If an organisation is to cease trading it should take the steps outlined in its transfer plan.
- 7.3.4. An organisation is expected to provide the CA with a copy of all its horse records in an electronic format as requested by that CA in the event that it ceases to manage horse passports and the information is not transferred to another approved organisation. Contact details for CAs are provided at the start of this document.

Approval

- 8.1.1. The intention of this document is to enable organisations to meet the CAs expectations with regards to operating efficiently. It aims to do this by setting out the minimum standards necessary to ensure efficient operation of the UK equine identification regime as a whole. These expectations include, but are not limited to, availability for contact for enforcement purposes and expectations to detect and manage fraud.
- 8.1.2. In order to ensure protection of the human food chain and compliance with European legislation, the CA reserves the right to audit any approved organisation at any time to ensure that these guidelines are being adhered to. Reasonable notice of an audit visit will normally be given and organisations must agree to such a visit. Organisations approved in the UK must be capable of being audited within the UK.

CAs do not currently have specific and direct legal powers to charge for auditing but reserve the right to introduce such powers at a future date.

- 8.1.3. Whilst CAs seek to help organisations meet their obligations, consistent failure to comply with any requirements in the regulations, this document or to cooperate with the CA may result in the withdrawal of their approval. Depending on the seriousness of the failure, the CA may:
- a) For minor failings, give clear notification of the areas where improvement is needed and a period of time that the CA considers reasonable to act. The timescale for improvement will depend on the seriousness and frequency of the failing. If sufficient improvement is not made within that timescale, the CA may suspend or withdraw approval.
 - b) In the most serious cases, remove approval immediately. These include but are not limited to potential breaches of horse passports or data protection legislation, a large number of shortcomings or failure to implement any improvements which have been requested by the CA within the timescale set. In these cases, organisations will be given clear reasons for the decision to withdraw approval.
- 8.1.4. Organisations have the right to make a representation against a decision to withdraw approval. Details of how to make such representation can be found in Annex 2 of this document.

Annex 1: Unique Equine Life Number

The UELN system

1. The European Regulation provides the legal basis for the use of a Unique Equine Life Number in all horse passports. A UELN is required to efficiently administer and manage horses within the horse industry. In the UK the UELN system should be used to create the Passport Identification Number on the horse passport.
2. All passports must be issued with a UELN using the first six digits allocated to the ORGANISATION at the time of approval.
3. The objective of the UELN system is designed to ensure that each horse in the world can be identified using a single reference number. However, the UELN system enables the historic registration numbers contained in stud books of birth to remain when included within this number.
4. The key principles of the UELN are documented on www.UELN.net, but due to variations in terminology, these guidance notes have been produced to clarify how the UELN is applied within the United Kingdom.
5. A full UELN should only be created when a Passport is issued and the PIOs should ensure that they keep details of the UELN number allocated to each horse passport that they issue.

Example of an UELN

6. The first three digits determine the territory that issued the passport and the second three digits identifies the organisation within that territory that issued the passport. In practice this code will never be maintained as two separate fields and will be issued as a single six digit code. The central UELN register maintains a list of these codes. The remaining nine digits uniquely identify the horse within an organisation.

8	2	6	0	0	4
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Detailed rules and exceptions

Territory Identifier

7. The Territory Identifier is a three digit numeric code that identifies the territory that is issuing the passport. In the United Kingdom this will always be allocated as the numeric code from ISO-3166 territory table and will consequently be 826. Horses issued with passports of another territory will start with a corresponding three digit numeric from the ISO-3166 territory table. For all historic records of horses where a UELN has not been created, the UELN code for the horse will be that of the Organisation that issued the passport.

8	2	6																
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8. The UELN system refers to the Territory Identifier as the “Territory of Birth”. If the owner of a foal wishes to obtain a passport from an organisation in another Member State of the European Union, the Territory Identifier will not reflect the “Territory of Birth”. In this instance the best place to record the territory of birth is embedded in the nine digit horse identifier.
9. In some instances an organisation may manage the passports of another territory by appropriate agreement from the relevant international organisation or association for competition or race horse management. In this instance it is the passport territory that is reflected as the Territory Identifier, not the physical location of the organisation. The following are foreign passports that are maintained in Great Britain:

Arabs born in Greece	300002
Arabs born in Malta	470008
Arabs born in Ireland	372008
Irish Standard and Trotting horses	372007

Organisation Identifier

10. The second three digits are numerics that have been assigned to uniquely identify the organisation that issued the passport.

			0	0	4													
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11. In order to accommodate historic identification numbers of the ISBC for Thoroughbreds, character codes are used e.g. Weatherbys Thoroughbreds use “0GB”. This exception results from the ISBC adopting an alphabetic suffix to denote territory of birth in 1999. Where there is a two digit code, e.g. GB for Great Britain and FR for France, the code is preceded by a 0 – “0GB” and “0FR”.

Horse Identifier

12. The last nine digits are alphanumeric which uniquely identify a horse that is registered within a particular organisation:

13. If the internal reference of the organisation is shorter than nine alphanumeric digits, zeros may be added to the front, to pad out the horse identifier to the required nine digits.
14. If the internal reference is longer than nine digits, look at the composition of this reference and strip out any data that may be part of the identifier but is not required to uniquely identify the horse in your organisation. Occasionally, a date, the sex or the height of the horse may be included as part of the identifier. If this is the case strip out this additional data and provide a unique reference shorter than nine digits.

Further Information

15. More about Unique Equine Life Numbers can be found at www.ueln.net. This website also provides details of the UELN numbers for all approved breed societies and international sport and competition organisations.

Annex 2: Representations

England

Challenges to decisions to withdraw approval must be made in writing within 21 days of receiving written notification of the decision. Notice of the challenge, together with any written representations and evidence in support, must be sent to the Deputy Director of Animal Health Policy and Implementation, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR. Representations will be processed in accordance with procedures outlined in [The Horses \(Zootechnical Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 Article 5](#).

Northern Ireland

Challenges to decisions to withdraw approval must be made in writing within 21 days of receiving written notification of the decision. Notice of the challenge, together with any written representations and evidence in support, must be sent to the Farm Policy Branch, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Ballymiscaw, Belfast BT4 3SB. Representations will be processed in accordance with procedures outlined in [The Horses \(Zootechnical Standards\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2009 Regulation 5](#).

Scotland

Challenges to decisions to withdraw approval must be made in writing within 21 days of receiving written notification of the decision. Notice of the challenge, together with any written representations and evidence in support, must be sent to Scottish Ministers, St Andrews House, Edinburgh EH1 3DJ. Representations will be processed in accordance with procedures outlined in [The Horses \(Zootechnical Standards\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2008 Article 5](#).

Wales

Challenges to decisions to withdraw approval must be made in writing within 21 days of receiving written notification of the decision. Notice of the challenge, together with any written representations and evidence in support, must be sent to the Welsh Government, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Division, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ. Representations will be processed in accordance with procedures outlined in [The Horses \(Zootechnical Standards\) \(Wales\) Regulations Article 5](#).

Annex 3: Frequently Asked Questions

General

In the absence of domestic legislation what should we advise horse owners who ask whether they still need identify their horse?

Although domestic legislation is not yet in place, EU Regulation 2015/262 became law in all Member States on 1 January 2016. This means that it is still a legal requirement for owners to identify their horse. We will keep you informed of progress with bringing in new domestic legislation.

Can we run an online contact form rather than publish our contact email address on our website?

Yes, a contacts page on your website is acceptable - you must still inform us of any changes to your contact information.

How will derogated populations be managed under the new Regulations?

We are currently considering this and will issue information as soon as we are in a position to do so.

Central Equine Database

How will the database be funded?

The cost of developing and running the database will be met by Government.

How will information be exchanged between CED and PIO databases?

The supplier has not yet been appointed so we cannot give you any information at this stage. We expect that work on the database will begin in May. The supplier will be talking to PIOs early on and the database will be built iteratively with opportunities for testing and feedback during the development phase.

Passports - General

Is it correct that late applications need to be dealt with by issuing either a replacement or duplicate passport?

This is correct. We agree this is confusing but it is what the EU regulation stipulates. The EU Commission has explained that late applications must be dealt with as either a

duplicate or replacement passport because of the potential risk that a passport may already have been issued for that horse.

Are manually applied rivets acceptable?

The EU Regulation says that passports must be machine riveted so that pages cannot be fraudulently removed or replaced. A manual or fully automated machine is acceptable as long as the passport is securely bound.

We supply an application form and silhouette to our customers- does the vet need to sign both forms?

The vet is required to check and confirm that the identity details for the horse are correct. You should ensure that your application documentation provides a suitable place for the vet's confirmation and you must check that this has been supplied.

Which passport sections are mandatory?

- Breed/Registered passports – Sections I to X are mandatory and must be included. Sections XI is optional and may be included.
- ID only passports - section I to IV are mandatory and must be included. Sections V to XI are optional and may be included but information should not be entered in Section V.

Can additional non statutory pages be included in ID only passports?

No – with the exception of a title page at the front of the passport.

Can we issue duplicate passports without receiving a full application form signed by a vet?

No - all passport applications, including applications for duplicate or replacement passports must have the horse's identification details confirmed by a vet.

Passports – Identification details (Section I)

Must Part A be laminated?

The regulation requires Part A of Section I to be laminated **unless** it has been produced in a way that prevents any changes being made after issue.

Must entries in Part A be typed?

Yes, you must type print Part A using the information provided by the customer and verified by the vet on the application form.

What do we do if the date of birth is unknown?

An estimated date must be provided.

What is the difference between country of birth and place of birth?

Country of birth means the Member State where the animal was born. Place of birth means the address of the holding where the animal was born.

What do we do if the place of birth is unknown?

If the address is unknown you should enter an approximate location for example county of birth. If this is not possible, you may enter the animal's current location instead.

Where should additional studbook registrations be recorded?

Details of additional studbook registrations should either be recorded in Section V or in any non-statutory pages of the passport.

Passports - Details of Ownership (Section IV)

Can ownership information be kept in a separate ownership card?

Yes, however as the passport is likely to still need to be returned to a PIO for updating, it is advised to maintain ownership details in Section IV. Note that you must still include sufficient space in Section IV for ownership details to be recorded for the expected lifetime of the horse.

If a sticker is used for transfer of ownership can the box in Section IV “stamp of the organisation association or official service and signature” be left blank?

The box may be left blank as long as the PIO has properly checked information provided, has authorised the change is correct and it is clear from the sticker in the passport that this is the case.

Passports – Certificate of Origin (Section V)

Can we include an extended pedigree within the non-statutory pages of a registered horse's passport?

Where an extended pedigree is known you can choose whether to record it either in the statutory section after section v or as additional pages in the non-statutory section.