



DAERA authorised Private Veterinary Practitioner: Update on Certification Procedures for Australia and Hong Kong

Bulletin: aPVP 02/21

Issued: 21st May 2021

Audience: authorised Private Veterinary Practitioners (aPVPs)

Subject: Improved Digital Security Measures for Export Health Certificates Printed on Crown Vellum (Gold) Watermarked Paper

Purpose

1. To inform aPVPs of new digital security measures being introduced for Export Health Certificates (EHC) to replace existing Crown Vellum (Gold) watermarked security paper.

Background

2. EHCs issued from the United Kingdom to third countries are normally issued using Crown Vellum watermarked security paper to provide anti-fraud assurance to Importing Competent Authorities of the authenticity of UK certification.
3. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, DEFRA agreed, with a number of third country Competent Authorities, the production of EHCs on plain white paper as a temporary measure to assist in issuing EHCs.
4. DEFRA and DAERA have also been working on a solution to remove Crown Vellum watermarked security paper across all third countries and replace with plain white paper with improved digital security measures. The new security features include a **12 digit unique code** applied to page 1 of the EHC and a '**dithered watermark**' applied to all pages, visible when the EHC is printed on white paper.
5. This feature will apply to EHCs issued through DECOL, for the following Third Country Competent Authorities who have been approached to adopt this so far:
 - **Hong Kong**
 - **Australia**

Initial use of the new technical solution will take place during a trial, during which time DAERA will be requesting feedback on the new procedures from Importing Competent Authorities and issuing Certifying Officers. This trial period will begin

during **week commencing Monday 24th May**, DAERA will advise of exact date in advance.

6. **All other** EHCs will continue to be:
 - Issued using white paper as a temporary measure during coronavirus restrictions (where agreements are in place).
 - Issued using Crown Vellum (Gold) Watermarked security paper
 - Issued on white paper where Crown Vellum Watermarked Paper is not required e.g. EHCs for the European Union (EU)
7. When EHCs for Hong Kong and Australia are issued to the Certifying Officer, a 12-digit code is generated and visible on the first page of the certificate.
8. The certificate serial number and a crown dithered watermark will be added to all pages of the export health certificate. The crown dithered watermark consists of a crown in the centre of the page and the certificate serial number displayed as a diagonal watermark.
9. Appendix 1 provides an example of an EHC including the dithered watermark.
10. On receipt, the Importing Competent Authority can enter the 12-digit code (from the certified EHC), into a new online verification service to confirm the validity of the certificate (valid or invalid) as part of the security features.
11. The EHC must be printed **on plain white paper**. The 12-digit code and watermarks will be visible on it.
12. Use of [Adobe Reader](#) is recommended for printing an EHC with the dithered watermark security features.
13. After carrying out inspection/examination of the export consignment and certification procedures to complete the plain white paper EHC, the Certifying Officer must retain a copy for their own records for two years.
14. DAERA will respond to any correspondence from the Importing Competent Authority if any queries are received regarding the authenticity of a white paper EHC. DAERA may contact Certifying Officers to complete authenticity checks should the need arise.

Benefits of New Anti-Fraud Security Measures

15. This move towards a more streamlined digital delivery of EHCs will improve security, efficiency and reduce administration and postal costs.

Further Information

- Any queries relating to new Anti-Fraud Security measures should be sent to: DAERATradeExports@daera-ni.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

An example of an EHC including the new dithered watermark (for illustration purposes only):

