

**EXECUTIVE NOTE TO
THE SHEEP AND GOATS (IDENTIFICATION AND TRACEABILITY)
(SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2007
S.S.I 2007/559**

The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972. This instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure.

Policy Objectives

This instrument implements Community legislation, the aim of which is to standardise and improve the identification and tracing of sheep and goats across the European Union and to provide a system that allows animals to be traced quickly and effectively.

The main purpose of this instrument is to amend the principal domestic Regulations relating to sheep and goat identification and tracing as a result of bringing to an end the domestic identification requirements to reflect the fact that the UK will no longer operate under derogation from the main double tagging regime under Council Regulation 21/2004.

In particular:

It amends the principal Regulations by substituting new definitions to take account of new terms of reference included in the amended instrument.

It substitutes new provisions in relation to the application of identification of animals as a result of the fact that the UK will no longer operate under derogation from identifying animals with two means of identification. In particular it provides for methods of identification relating to animals born on or after the instrument comes into force, animals born before the instrument comes into force and those that have never been identified.

It provides for, by making use of the available 'slaughter' derogation in the Community legislation, that animals not intended for export and intended for slaughter under the age of 12 months to be identified by a single identification tag. It also provides on how to identify these animals that are subsequently sent to export or not slaughtered within 12 months.

It provides that all animals sent for export must be identified with two identical means of identification (ear tags) and also that animals imported from third countries must be identified with two means of identification within 14 days of arrival.

It establishes new provisions relating to the removal and replacement of means of identification, in particular providing methods for when the codes of the original means of identification are known and when not known.

It provides that holding registers shall be updated with information relating to replacement means of identification by cross referencing new identification codes against original ones if known.

It also extends the provision that livestock markets are not responsible for replacement identification of animals and it also clarifies that an 'R' tag is a 'replacement tag'.

Finally it also reduces the length of time, from 6 years to 3 years, that holding registers need to be retained from when the last entry was made.

Consultation

A public consultation took place as well as several Industry Stakeholder meetings. No significant issues were raised in the responses.

Financial Implications

The instrument has no financial effects on the Scottish Government, or local government. It will also result in a slight decrease in cost burden for most sheep and goat keepers with a decrease across the Industry from approx £1.8 million to £1.55 million per annum. A Regulatory Impact Assessment has been completed for this instrument which provides full detailed costing. Although the amendment instrument provides that animals will now require to be identified with two means of identification, the cost savings can be attributed to i) no longer having to apply a further means of identification every time the animal moves, ii) the adoption of a slaughter derogation that means animals under the age of 12 months intended for slaughter can be identified by a single tag and, iii) a reduction of the administrative burden on most keepers as a result of making the system less complex.

Scottish Government Rural Directorate
12 December 2007