

Northern Ports Liaison Network Meeting

Date: 8th April 2020

Teleconference Minutes



Attendees:

Sue Ziolkowski (Tees) (Chair)	Theresa Pearson (Durham)	Jane Muzielaar (South Tyneside)
Lisa Evans (Tees)	Miguel Santos (FSA)	Eimear (Manchester Airport)
Andrew McAlpine (Tees)	Lesley Huitson (Hartlepool)	Andrew Delaney (Doncaster)
Andrea Smith (Manchester)	Nick Wellington (Doncaster)	Andrew Stephenson (Sunderland)
Lynette Crossley (Manchester)	Josie Bourne (Newcastle)	Martin McGowan (North Tyneside)
Ken Ross (Blythe)		

Item	Description	Responsible Person
1	<p>Nominations for representation on the Executive Board</p> <p>Andrea Smith was nominated by Sue Ziolkowski, seconded by Lynette Crossley</p>	
2	<p>FSA – OCR regs & Update</p> <p>Miguel talked through a presentation that provided useful links to guidance and on line training in relation to Imported Food and Feed and the new Official Controls Regulations. Information on the impact of Covid-19 was provided with current advice being that there is no change to official controls however electronic documentary checks can be carried out where there is a delay in obtaining the originals.</p> <p>The presentation was circulated to attendees prior to the teleconference and are available on request from port.health@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk</p>	Miguel Santos
3	<p>Ship Sanitation Certificate (SSC) during Covid-19</p> <p>Sue Ziolkowski provided an overview of the proposed SSC Lite which briefly includes;</p> <p>APHA have proposed "SSC Lite"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have been advised that the national leads for port health in the devolved administrations have agreed a 3 month time frame for the proposal. However, the proposal has yet to be approved by the Department for Health and Social Care. It is believed that a more explanatory title is required and it has been suggested that the term "Contingency SSC for Covid-19 Emergency" is used. The expression "SSC Lite" could be retained as the short form between port health officers etc. 	All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There appears to be general agreement that a flat fee of £100.00 is appropriate. As formal approval is required by the APHA Executive Board, they will be contacted by email for a decision. The decision will need to be ratified at the next formal Board meeting. <p>The group was also reminded that Under the International Health Regulations, we have a duty to carry out a Ship Sanitation Inspection upon request. This includes both a physical and documentary check on the vessel and they are charged a fee, currently set by APHA. As yet the World Health Organisation (WHO) has not requested or recommended any changes in the way this is carried out.</p> <p>Concerns were raised by a number of the group on the possible transmission of Covid-19 from asymptomatic people visiting vessels, and the possibility of transmission between Officers and crew.</p> <p>It was identified that if a vessel does not have a valid certificate, it may be refused entry at a port, or fined heavily for not having a valid certificate. It was also mentioned that if a certificate had been endorsed with a comment that due to Covid-19, a full inspection was not carried out, that this could also lead to confusion and fines, particularly as the SSC handbook does not allow for a code on the Evidence Report Form (ERF) for this type of situation.</p> <p>All agreed that a visit must be made where there is evidence of a public health issue on board the vessel.</p> <p>Whilst it was mentioned that Martin Walker had approached the WHO and was verbally told that a lite inspection would be recognised as a pragmatic approach under these exceptional circumstances, this has not been officially put in writing.</p> <p>Most welcomed the 'lite' approach but agreed we must have direction from Government for this to be implemented.</p>	
4	<p>Outbreaks/suspected cases of Covid-19</p> <p>Many PHA have had notifications and queries around a member of crew showing symptoms but no confirmed cases had been identified.</p> <p>The following issues had been identified;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot refusing to go on board – many of us agreed that with social distancing and extra measures, such as external access to the bridge, limited crew on the bridge, social distancing and increased cleaning and disinfection, that the risk could be reduced to an acceptable level. • All agreed that using NHS 111, and contacting PHE for advice have proved beneficial and informative during this time. • General guidance was that if a crew member has symptoms, then they should self isolate for 7 days or until symptoms stop. 	All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rest of the crew are also subject to 14 day self isolation, as per recommendations for a household. 	
5	<p>Food & Feed Import Controls (ID & Physical checks)</p> <p>Following FSA and Defra guidance it is business as usual until told otherwise, with documents being allowed to be checked electronically until originals can be obtained.</p> <p>Some legislation allows for flexibility of sampling regimes, so sampling can be pushed back to a later date for some imports. Please check the legislation before doing so.</p>	All
6	<p>Organic certificates</p> <p>Defra issued guidance on the issuing of COI with the following being an extract.</p> <p>The Commission have introduced a time limited temporary solution to ensure organic imports can be cleared on arrival. What it says is COIs already placed on TRACES NT should be accepted by authorities in Europe where the original copy COI is delayed. The original copy should be presented for endorsement later when available.</p> <p><i>“In the context of COVID-19, we have been made aware that some of you are facing issues to ensure that the original of certificates of inspection accompanies the consignment and is presented to the relevant Member States authorities for endorsement before the release of the goods for free circulation in the EU market. This seems to be due to the serious restrictions applied to airplane transport and affecting the courier services used to deliver those paper certificates, as a consequence of the measures introduced to protect human health.</i></p> <p><i>In case you are prevented from providing for a printed and hand-signed copy of the certificate of inspection due to the exceptional circumstances linked to COVID-19, I invite you to continue issuing the certificate of inspection in TRACES and to validate Box 18.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, and purely as a temporary working solution to prevent disruptions of trade, the competent Member States authorities agreed to accept to perform their documentary checks based exclusively on the information available in TRACES. The Member States authorities will endorse the certificate in TRACES by validating Box 20.</i></p> <p><i>The temporary working solution proposed above is only intended to cover the contingency situation linked to the current COVID-19 pandemic and it should ONLY address the most urgent needs linked to COVID-19.</i></p> <p><i>It will be in place until the 31 May 2020. The Commission will revisit the situation in due time.</i></p>	

	<i>I will keep you informed when arrangements may be reviewed in the light of further evolutions of the situation.”</i>	
7	<p>AOB</p> <p>Miguel reiterated that the FSA and Imports team are available for advice and guidance, their contact details are available on the presentation. Please keep checking on FSA Smarter Comms for up to date Q&A and other advice and guidance and as always, feedback is appreciated.</p> <p>Sue thanked Andrea for arranging the teleconference</p>	<p>Miguel</p> <p>Sue</p>
8	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>To be confirmed</p>	

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