Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Consultation on improvements to equine identification and traceability in England

Date: 5th April 2022

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

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Part 1 – Introduction

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the UK Government's proposals for improving equine identification and traceability in England.

Context

The existing equine identification system in England, was developed in line with EU regulations. It is based on the requirement for paper documents (equine passports) and underpinned by a Central Equine Database of all equines recorded as resident in England. It was designed to support the EU-led priority of protecting public health, through maintaining the integrity of the human food chain. However, while this remains a priority here, the UK Government also needs the system to support the safeguarding of both equine health and welfare. Since it was not built with these functions in mind, it does not support them as well as it could. It focuses on the owner and their responsibilities, rather than the location of the animal and those who are responsible for it on a day-to-day basis. This means we have limited knowledge of where equines are kept. As well as the welfare issues this creates, poor traceability poses a risk in terms of potential disease spread in an outbreak situation. The UK's departure from the EU has provided the opportunity to review the equine identification system and ensure that it supports all three of the Government's priorities effectively.

The review began with targeted engagement with a number of stakeholders to understand the shortcomings of the existing system and how it might be improved. This has helped shape the proposals contained in this document.

Scope

The proposals relate to England only. We will also consider responses to the consultation with Scottish and Welsh Governments and the Northern Ireland Executive, to assess any impact on the UK internal market, and to ensure that any changes ultimately introduced, do not impede the movement of equines across national boundaries; and contribute towards a more robust and effective traceability system across the entire UK.

Audience

Anyone may respond to the consultation. Those who may have an interest include:

- Animal welfare organisations
- Breeding establishments
- Equine sales companies
- Farming unions
- The Food Standards Agency

- Horseracing administrations
- Local authorities
- Owners
- Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs)
- Show, competition and race organisers
- Stables and livery yards
- Studbooks and breed societies
- Traders and trade bodies
- Transport companies
- The veterinary profession

Responding to the consultation

This consultation starts on 5th April 2022 and closes on 28th June 2022.

We would ask you to respond to the consultation questions using the online tool, which can be found on Citizen Space at https://consult.defra.gov.uk/equine-id-and-movement/improvements-to-equine-id-and-traceability-in-engl/. However, responses can also be sent to Defra by email or post. If responding via email or post, please answer the following questions:

1. **Would you like your response to be confidential? If you answered 'yes' to this question, please give your reason.**
2. **What is your name?**
3. **What is your email address?**
4. **What is your organisation?**

Enquiries and responses should be directed to

EquineID-consultation@defra.gov.uk or

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2nd Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool,

1-2 Peasholme Green,

York,

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If you would like to receive hard copies of the consultation documents, you may contact EquineID-consultation@defra.gov.uk.

After the consultation

Members of the public may ask for a copy of the responses under the Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. If you do not want your response – including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. If you respond via Citizen Space, you will find an option to request your response remains confidential. However, please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will **not** count as a confidentiality request. For both written (email/post) and online responses, please explain why you need to keep the details confidential; for online responses, you will find an option on Citizen Space to do so. We will take your request into account if someone asks for this information under the FOI legislation. However, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

We will summarise all responses once the consultation window is complete. This summary will include a list of organisations that respond, but not individual's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

This consultation is in line with the UK Government's Consultation Principles. **Please note that a consultation period of 12 weeks applies.** More information on the UK Government's Consultation Principles can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance.

If you respond via Citizen Space, please also note that we will be asking you to provide feedback on the survey at the end, as well as any suggestions you might have for improvements.

Part 2 – Consultation

Proposals

Central Equine Database

The Central Equine Database (CED) contains details of all equines resident in the UK, including those with passports issued by UK Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs) and those with passports issued in other countries, which have subsequently been recorded by a UK PIO. The CED thus underpins the equine identification and traceability regime.

An accurate record of all equines living in the UK is essential to enable the UK and Devolved governments to locate and trace animals in the event of a disease outbreak; like those recently for Equine Influenza, Equine Herpes Virus and Contagious Equine Metritis, to control any disease spread effectively. In addition, being able to return lost or stolen equines to their owners or identify those responsible for mistreating their animals, is critical to their

welfare. Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to ensure the accuracy of the CED data, even if they have equines that never move from a particular location.

Data quality

Much of the data on the CED is currently inaccurate and incomplete. This is for a variety of reasons. We know, for example, that owners do not always realise it is a legal requirement to have their equines microchipped and passported, even when this has happened outside the UK. If a horse is registered with a PIO from another country and permanently imported to the UK, they are required to register (or overstamp – a stamp with a UK PIO's credentials can be added to the existing passport) such horses with a UK PIO, if they are resident in the UK.

In addition, if an owner or their equine's circumstances change, they are required to ensure their records are updated within defined timeframes. This includes when the animal is sold, microchipped or when it dies.

We recognise that under the current arrangements, for some owners, the practicalities and cost* of having to submit their paper passports (and any supporting documentation) to the PIOs to update their records, is a significant disincentive.

[* The cost of updating a passport varies between PIOs, but is generally around £15, although can be as much as £60.]

Digitisation

Considering the above, we are proposing that any amendments necessary to equine identification records in the future can be made electronically through the Digital Stable (the public portal of the Central Equine Database designed specifically for this purpose) and at no cost to the owner.

We will ensure that users are clear on precisely what is required to keep their passports and CED records up to date and how the process operates (*e.g.*, through the provision of additional guidance). It is proposed that submission of the appropriate supporting documentation will also be permitted through the Digital Stable.

Users will be able to make any changes using remote access via a smartcard/smartphone app. We recognise that some areas of the country have limited broadband or Wi-Fi facilities. However, in these circumstances, the Digital Stable facility allows the changes to be keyed in and then flagged up on the system as soon as the device comes into range.

However, if owners want their paper passports updated, they will need to contact a PIO directly, who will be able to arrange this. PIOs will continue to be able to update the CED themselves, without using the Digital Stable, based on any information gathered directly (via paper passports or digitally if available) from owners or keepers.

The future use of paper identification in England will be reviewed in the light of developments surrounding digital records. However, please note that whatever decision is ultimately taken here, we expect paper identification to continue to be required for the time being, to accompany movements to and from the EU and Northern Ireland. Wales have also signalled their intention to retain paper identification.

Please also note that at present we are not proposing that the updating of studbook or breeding records be carried out using the Digital Stable. Therefore, these updates will need to continue to be made through direct contacts with the relevant PIO.

Responsibilities

Since the person responsible for an equine on a day-to-day basis is not always the owner, we propose to allow keepers approved by the owner, as well as owners, to update the records either via the Digital Stable or via a PIO (following a similar pattern to the EU's new concept of "operator" – which covers both).

We will expect one or the other to keep the records up to date at all times and will take appropriate enforcement action to ensure this happens. We are also exploring the potential to strengthen existing enforcement in this consultation – see section titled Enforcement.

We propose to actively encourage passport issuing authorities in the EU and governing bodies for racing and sport, to continue to notify us when equines which were originally identified in their countries, have been permanently imported into the UK. This will allow us to update the CED if neither the seller nor buyer has notified us, or to corroborate information provided by one or the other.

We expect the equine sector to be fully supportive of this general approach and to use their own channels to ensure adherence to the rules, *e.g.*, by encouraging show and sporting event organisers to check the accuracy of the identification provided and refuse the participation of those whose records are incomplete or inaccurate. We anticipate major events run by the likes of the British Horseracing Authority, British Equestrian and Weatherbys to check all records, including those details relating to previous veterinary activity such as vaccination records. Whilst we would also expect small, local events to check equine records, we would not however, expect them to do an extensive check of all medical records beyond those to satisfy their own local rules *e.g.,* for flu vaccinations.

We also propose to allow vets to update the Digital Stable/CED either directly, or through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) with their veterinary software, *e.g.*, to record microchips or those vaccinations and other medical treatments, that would alter the equine's food chain status.

In addition, we propose to set shorter, standardised time limits for PIOs to update their own records and in turn, the CED.

Access to the Database

Currently, there are a limited number of enforcement bodies that have (read-only) access to the CED, to assist their activities. These include the Food Standards Agency, local authorities and some Animal and Plant Health Agency staff. We are in the process of extending this facility to police forces (a trial is already underway).

We are also considering whether this facility should be extended to other groups *e.g.*, Food Business Operators (FBOs, such as slaughterhouses), welfare organisations and event organisers, *e.g.*, British Equestrian and the British Horseracing Authority (the latter group currently requiring the consent of the owner).

Historic records

Enforcement bodies like the Food Standards Agency and local authorities have asked for a longer retention period for records kept on the CED to assist their enforcement activities. Therefore, we suggest keeping records on the CED for more than the required minimum of 2 years after death, reviewing as necessary regarding data protection legislation.

In addition, some stakeholders have asked for historic records to be made available to future owners. Currently, this would require the previous owner's consent, we propose to maintain this arrangement.

Keeping track of changes to ownership is particularly challenging in the equine sector and therefore in future, we intend to require both vendor and purchaser to alert the CED in these instances, (currently only the new owner must notify a PIO of the transfer). We are also proposing to reduce the amount of time within which the owner needs to notify the PIO of a change of ownership (currently 30 days) to 14 days, to align with notifications relating to medications.

Change to record	Current time limits
Owner to notify PIO of change of ownership	30 days
Owner to notify PIO where a **horse has received medications which are not permitted for animals intended for slaughter for human consumption**	14 days
Owner to notify PIO of change to any other details	30 days

Links with other databases

We propose to ensure the CED has the necessary robust interlinkages with other databases to allow the timely exchange of information, *e.g.*, those belonging to PIOs, the horseracing and thoroughbred sectors, the Devolved Administrations and the Republic of Ireland (in the latter case, given the number of UK equines registered with all-Ireland studbooks based there and the fact that it is our main international trading partner). We also intend to develop

suitable APIs to allow data from the CED to be linked to other electronic systems used to support *e.g.*, export health certification.

Questions

Digitisation

5. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that owners or keepers should be able to update all identification records on the CED (not just microchip, food chain status and deaths), digitally (and to submit supporting documentation in the same way)? Please explain your views.**

   ☐**Strongly agree**

   ☐**Somewhat agree**

   ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

   ☐**Somewhat disagree**

   ☐**Strongly disagree**

6. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that owners should be able to apply for a new digital passport rather than the initial passport needing to be a paper document (to note, paper documentation would still be needed for certain purpose such as some international movement which could be applied for at a later date)? Please explain your views.**

   ☐**Strongly agree**

   ☐**Somewhat agree**

   ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

   ☐**Somewhat disagree**

   ☐**Strongly disagree**

7. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that changes to studbook/breed details should <u>not</u> be made digitally and continue to be notified direct to the relevant PIO as currently? Please explain your views.**

   ☐**Strongly agree**

   ☐**Somewhat agree**

   ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

   ☐**Somewhat disagree**

   ☐**Strongly disagree**

Responsibilities

8. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that vets should be allowed to update the CED digitally for the purpose of recording microchips, vaccinations and other medical treatments? Please explain your views.**

   ☐**Strongly agree**

   ☐**Somewhat agree**

   ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

   ☐**Somewhat disagree**

   ☐**Strongly disagree**

9. **Are there any other relevant groups that you think should be allowed to update the CED digitally (please specify)? Please state which groups and explain your views.**

   ☐**Strongly agree**

   ☐**Somewhat agree**

   ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

   ☐**Somewhat disagree**

   ☐**Strongly disagree**

Access to the Database

10. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that read-only access to the CED should be extended to FBOs (*e.g.*, slaughterhouses), welfare organisations and event organisers? Please specify which, if any, organisations and explain your views**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

11. **Are there any other relevant bodies that you think should have read-only access to the CED (please specify)? Please state which bodies and explain your views.**

Historic records

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the release of historic ownership data contained on the CED to future owners should continue only to be available with the consent of the current owner? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that both the current and new owner should be responsible for notifying a change of ownership? Please explain your views and how this could work in practice.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the time limit for notifying the PIO of a change of ownership should be reduced to 14 days? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the time limits for all notifications to PIOs of changes to an equine's records should be standardised? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

Links with other databases

16. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that other databases *e.g.*, those belonging to PIOs, the horseracing and thoroughbred sectors, the Devolved Administrations and the Republic of Ireland should be allowed to update the CED via APIs? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

17. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should allow APIs to link data from the CED to other electronic systems used to support *e.g.*, export health certification? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

Traceability

Currently, the habitual location of the equine is not recorded in its passport *i.e.*, the usual location of the equine, or intended location in the case of recent purchases, such locations could include, but are not limited to, a home yard, training establishment or a rehoming centre. Not knowing an equine's habitual location makes traceability challenging, *e.g.*, in the event of our seeking to contain a disease outbreak, particularly where the owner (whose details are recorded) is located a significant distance away from where the equine is kept. Therefore, we propose to make it a requirement for the owner or keeper to record the habitual location of the equine.

We are also exploring the scope for the temporary location of an equine to be recorded, *i.e.*, where the equine does not normally reside, this may be within England, elsewhere in the UK or internationally, *e.g.*, when attending sporting events, sales or as part of the breeding process. Such locations could include, but are not limited to, showgrounds, race meets, sale events, dealer's yards or stud visits. A hack or day ride would not be included in the definition of a temporary location.

We propose to make it a requirement for organisers of equine events and sales to keep records of those animals that attend them (and to make them available to competent authorities if requested). Some stakeholders suggested the organisers be required to log their details and those of their locations, on the Digital Stable. We are seeking wider views on this.

Questions

18. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be made a legal requirement to record the habitual location of each equine on the CED? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

19. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that some, or all, temporary locations should also be included on the CED? Please specify which, if any, locations should be included. Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

20. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that organisers of events, sales, etc. should be required to keep a record of the equines involved? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

21. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that organisers of events, sales etc. should also be required to log relevant details digitally on the CED (*e.g.,* via the Digital Stable)? Please explain your views.**

☐**Strongly agree**

☐**Somewhat agree**

☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

☐**Somewhat disagree**

☐**Strongly disagree**

Registration/Identification

Those stakeholders we have already spoken to have indicated that the rules surrounding the deadlines for registering equines are confusing, particularly as they vary for different UK countries. We are exploring potential simplification of the arrangements. One suggestion from stakeholders is to make it a requirement to have registered the equine with a PIO by 31st December in the year of birth (with some limited flexibility when it is born on or shortly before the deadline) or before a foal, without its dam, leaves its place of birth permanently.

We also know that there are some situations where it is difficult to arrange appropriate identification under the current rules, particularly within a short timeframe, *e.g.*, where an equine needs to be taken into the urgent care of a welfare organisation or where a semi-wild equine is being moved from its derogated area direct to a slaughterhouse. We are looking at possible alternatives, including the potential to introduce some form of simple, temporary identification to cover these situations.

We are very keen to utilise the benefits of digital technology to support improved equine identification and traceability. However, we recognise that paper documents will, for the time being, continue to be required for movements to and from the EU and Northern Ireland (Wales also intend to continue following the EU in underpinning their identification regime with paper). Therefore, whilst we propose to allow owners and keepers to update their records through the Digital Stable and to utilise a combination of smartcards and smartphone apps for remote access in England (with the potential to build-in the likes of biometric and other appropriate links as technology develops), we are not yet in a position to remove paper passports altogether. Even domestically, we have some reservations about moving to full digitisation, particularly whilst retaining the potential for paper studbook/breed society records. However, we would welcome the views of consultation respondents, and in any case, we intend to keep the matter under review.

We know enforcement authorities in particular, are concerned about identifying fraudulent equine passports, given the significant variation in size, colour and design of these documents (as well as their paper and ink quality – and other security features) and we propose to attempt to standardise these.

We also propose to standardise passport application forms on the same basis. We believe this would also be particularly helpful for owners registering with multiple PIOs.

Some stakeholders have raised concerns that those buying equines are not always aware that some studbooks/breed societies also produce identification-only passports. Those with identification-only passports do not qualify as 'registered' equines. This has been a particular problem for buyers of some semi-wild ponies who think they are buying a registered animal. We want to explore how we can make it easier to identify from the passport, whether an equine is registered or not. It has been suggested that adding a note on the passport cover could be a solution to this problem. Currently, no changes are allowed to the passport cover. However, it is possible to add supplementary pages to identification-only passports. Additional coloured pages could be added which would be distinguishable from the rest of the passport, where a note saying this equine is not eligible for registration could be added.

Questions

22. To what extent would you, or would you not, support a standard requirement to register equines by 31st December in the year of birth (with only very limited flexibility for those born on or shortly before this date) or before a foal without its dam leaves its place of birth permanently? Please explain your views.

- ☐**Strongly agree**
- ☐**Somewhat agree**
- ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐**Somewhat disagree**
- ☐**Strongly disagree**

22.1. Do you have any alternative suggestions to the above? Please explain your views.

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a simplified temporary identification is appropriate to deal with moving equines to the protection of welfare organisations, direct to slaughter or for another purpose? <u>Please specify which purpose/s you think a simplified temporary identification would be appropriate for</u>. Please explain your views.

- ☐**Strongly agree**
- ☐**Somewhat agree**
- ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐**Somewhat disagree**
- ☐**Strongly disagree**

24. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a temporary identification should be digital and applied for using a standardised digital application? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

25. To what extent do you agree or disagree that paper passports should be retained for use domestically in England, as well as to accompany international movements, *e.g.,* to the EU? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

26. To what extent do you agree or disagree that paper passports and the application forms necessary to obtain them should be in a standardised format? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

27. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be possible to add a note in supplementary pages of identification-only passports to confirm that the equine is not eligible to be registered? Please explain your views.

- ☐ **Strongly agree**
- ☐ **Somewhat agree**
- ☐ **Neither agree nor disagree**
- ☐ **Somewhat disagree**
- ☐ **Strongly disagree**

28. **Do you have any alternative suggestions to confirm the unregistered status of equines in identification-only passports? Please explain your views.**

Enforcement

This review has given us the opportunity to draw attention to the importance of a fully functioning and accurate CED for all within the equine sector (owners and others). We also propose to use it for a targeted communications campaign, to ensure everyone is aware of their statutory obligations and the consequences of not meeting them.

We are currently considering the potential for making it easier for local authorities to enforce the provisions of the legislation, including adapting the arrangements for fixed penalty notices to streamline the enforcement process and make it more cost-effective.

Some stakeholders suggested enforcement could be improved by requiring vets to check the accuracy of all information contained in passports (not simply identification-related details). However, we consider that would potentially create problems where *e.g.*, they were only being asked to sign off an Export Health Certificate (EHC) and so do not intend to introduce this. Although we will explore with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), the scope for vets to support enforcement more widely (including by reminding owners of their statutory obligations, where appropriate).

We know that Official Vets (OVs) have occasionally experienced problems in determining definitively whether an equine is 'registered' or not, particularly when they come to sign off EHCs for international movements and they may have doubts about the authenticity of the accompanying passport. This is also because some studbooks issue identification-only passports, as well as pedigree ones. Those equines with Identification-only passports, do not qualify as 'registered' (and are not therefore able to benefit from the more flexible arrangements permitted for moving this category of animals). We intend to make this distinction clearer on the CED to aid OVs, as well as exploring ways to make an equine's registration status more obvious from its passport (see question 24 above).

We will also be discussing with the industry how they can actively support official enforcement.

Questions

29. **Do you have any suggestions as to how enforcement of the equine identification rules could be improved? Please provide details and explain your views.**

Semi-wild equines

We know that there are particular challenges with the management and record-keeping of semi-wild equines in designated areas. We propose to work with these interests to make the arrangements as effective as possible in maintaining the desired biosecurity, whilst reflecting the unique nature of these populations.

The procedure for sending semi-wild equines to slaughter from designated areas changed in 2018, in line with EU legislation. These new arrangements, which include the requirement for all equines over 12 months old to have full identification, have been difficult for semi-wild interests to implement and have involved increased bureaucracy, with little or no obvious benefit to the health and welfare of the animals concerned. They have asked for the pre-2009 arrangements to be re-instated, *i.e.*, requiring only a rump sticker and declaration that the animal has not received any veterinary medication that would preclude it from the human food chain (this would clearly require the keeping of appropriate and accurate records). We are considering this alongside an alternative option that would involve generating a simpler, temporary identification (see questions 20 & 21). However, we will need to ensure that whatever solution is ultimately agreed, also provides the necessary robust public health protection.

Questions

30. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that the existing rules for the movement of semi-wild equines over 12 months old to slaughter should be changed? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

31. **If you do believe the existing rules should be changed, should the pre-2009 arrangements be re-instated, should a simpler temporary identification system be introduced, or do you have another suggestion? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Pre-2009 arrangements**

    ☐**Simpler temporary identification system**

    ☐**Other suggestion (please specify)**

Slaughter

Currently, equines that have been signed out of the human food chain cannot subsequently be re-instated. However, some are simply signed out by owners who would not wish them to be consumed. But if they are subsequently sold, the new owner may think differently. We are interested in views on whether, in these circumstances, the decision could be reversed, particularly in the interests of the animal's welfare at 'end of life'. The problem is that once the animal is signed out, any vet subsequently administering medicines that are not permitted in animals for human consumption, is no longer required to record them (in the

passport or otherwise). Therefore, to allow for the safe re-instatement of the animal, it would be necessary to introduce a strict legal requirement to ensure the application of any such medicine is fully recorded by the administering vet (preferably in the passport) regardless of the equine's current food chain status. We are also seeking views on removing an owner's ability to sign their equine out of the food chain for **any** reason. This would simplify the matter of different owners having contradicting views on whether the equine should be eligible for slaughter.

Questions

32. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be possible to allow equines previously signed out of the human food chain to be re-instated at a future point? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

33. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should remove the current ability for owners to sign an equine out of the food chain for any reason? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

Zootechnics

We intend to establish a clear distinction between identification and studbook records. We have no immediate plans to require the digitisation of studbook records or the process for updating them. However, the studbooks themselves may, of course, choose to do so.

Questions

34. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that it is appropriate to establish a clear distinction between identification and studbook records? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

35. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is value in digitising studbook records? Please explain your views.**

    ☐**Strongly agree**

    ☐**Somewhat agree**

    ☐**Neither agree nor disagree**

    ☐**Somewhat disagree**

    ☐**Strongly disagree**

Impact of proposals

A statement of impacts has been prepared to explore the potential impacts on businesses, as a result of any proposals to introduce changes to legislation on equine identification and traceability. Following the consultation, an impact assessment will be prepared to measure such impacts of legislative change more fully.

To assist the impact assessment, we want to gather some additional information about equine owners. There are some questions aimed at all respondents, and some for 'private equine owners' *i.e.*, non-business owners.

Impact questions for all

36. **For each time you update your equine's paper passport by sending it to a PIO, what is the cost to you? If you own multiple equines for which the cost of updating their passport is different, please provide details for each individual cost.**

37. **How long do you expect a PIO to take to update an equine's paper passport?**

38. **In your experience, has a PIO ever gone over your expected time frame? Please provide details.**

39. **In your experience, how long on average, does a paper passport update via a PIO take from start to finish (*i.e.*, from when you send the passport to you receiving it back)?**

40. **In your experience, how different is the passport application process between different PIOs?**

41. **In your opinion, how simple/difficult is it to understand the passport application process for different PIOs?**

42. **How often, if ever, is your equine's passport checked when travelling across England?**

43. **Do you currently carry your equine's passport with you if you travel to Scotland or Wales?**

44. **How often, if ever, do you move an equine out of the UK?**

45. **How often does the habitual location of your equine/s change? If you have multiple equines for which this differs, please explain each individual situation.**

46. **In your opinion, how simple/difficult do you think it will be to record the habitual location of an equine?**

Impact questions for private equine owners

47. **How often do you update your equine's paper passport? If you own multiple equines for which the answer is different, please specify the frequency you update the passport of each equine.**

48. **How many equines do you currently own?**

Legal status

Some of these policy proposals will require changes to legislation.

Glossary

APHA – The Animal and Plant Health Agency

APIs – Application Programming Interfaces

CED – Central Equine Database

Defra – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

EHC – Export Health Certificate

EU – European Union

FBOs – Food Business Operators

FSA – The Food Standards Agency

LAs – Local Authorities

OVs – Official Veterinarians

PIOs – Passport Issuing Organisations

RCVS – The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

UK – United Kingdom