

Trusted trader schemes

Pilots for trusted trader schemes for animal products start from **January 2024** - expression of interest to join the schemes opens in **Summer 2023**. [Webinar 10th May](#). Pilots will aim to provide assurance that schemes maintain equivalent levels of biosecurity, animal and public health safety, to national and international standards.

Frequent importers of medium-risk animal products and animal by-products - Accredited Trusted Trader Scheme

- The scheme will reduce the need for routine physical checks at the Border Control Posts by allowing members to take responsibility for carrying out routine checks and sampling to ensure the protection of biosecurity, animal and public health whilst being closely regulated by government.
- Co-design approach aims to build upon industry practices in developing requirements for assurances, and understanding which facilitations meet differing business models.

Small to medium or less frequent importers of medium-risk animal products and animal by-products - Technology Assurance Scheme

- Assurance based on supply chain data and technology outputs provided by members
- Potential to receive proportionate reduction in some border checks in return.

Trusted Trader Concept

- A trusted trader scheme is defined as any interaction where a trader goes through an upfront assurance process in order to be granted authorisation to use facilitations not available to traders by default.
- The Trusted Trader schemes for importing products of animal origin (POAO) and animal by-products (ABP) will provide alternative assurances to government.
- Members will be held to the UK's high biosecurity and food safety standards but will have different options for providing us with such assurance, with a range of benefits to traders in return.

Summary of the Schemes

As outlined within the TOM, there are proposals for two separate schemes, to ensure accessibility to varying business sizes and models.

Accredited Trusted Trader Scheme

- A scheme aimed at frequent importers of POAO and ABP
- Members would take on responsibility for performing checks and sampling to ensure the protection of biosecurity, animal and public health, whilst being regulated by the government
- Ideas for additional benefits are being explored and will be subject to further industry co-design.

Technology Assurance Scheme

- A 'lighter touch' scheme aimed accessible to a wider range of businesses importing POAO and ABP
- Members would provide to government with data that is gathered for their own purposes (e.g. supply chain data) and from digital assurance devices
- In turn, they will receive a proportionate reduction in border checks

Minimum expected Membership criteria



Be a registered business in the UK



Have a good compliance history (where available)



Have a named responsible person/s for the identification, management and monitoring of risks



Implement government-produced standard operating procedures to ensure equivalent assurance of public health and biosecurity safeguards



Have bio-secure premises and infrastructure



Provide end to end supply chain assurance



Have suitably trained staff who can act independently

Accredited Trusted Trader Scheme (ATTS)

ATTS will be co-designed with industry, specifically with businesses that are successful in applying to the pilot scheme with applications opening later in 2023

An initial cost/benefit analysis and early stakeholder engagement suggested that to make the scheme viable/beneficial to industry it would should look to:

- Be accessible to a range of business models/actors in the supply chain
- Build upon/enhance the food safety and quality assurance processes/procedures businesses already have in place
- Go beyond offering self-checking and provide additional benefits to industry

ATTS Pilot Approach

- ATTS pilots will explore whether it is possible for businesses to provide the necessary assurance on biosecurity, animal health and food safety risks.
- To investigate this, we will work with industry to develop methods to provide us with the same level of biosecurity assurance to official controls, such as border checks.
- The pilots will also allow for trialling additional benefits to ensure the scheme is feasible and beneficial to both government and members, and assessed to ensure equivalent risk mitigation against the Official Controls within the TOM.
- Through a published Expression of Interest Defra will be seeking a variety of business models to test different concepts. These will be evaluated through a cost/benefit analysis to develop the final scheme.

ATTS Pilot Process

An extended period of co-design is anticipated, followed by the pilots which we expect to run for 6 to 12 months.

The high-level framework for the pilots could cover:

- supply chain information (where the products come from, how they are produced, by who etc.).
- production assurance - rules/regulations for producers to uphold (auditing), sampling and testing of products etc.
- assurance during transit - temperature trackers, digital seals etc.
- checks at destination (including who undertakes them and the qualifications they hold/training they have undertaken).
- relevant data utilisation and sharing to inform compliance levels and identify noncompliance.
- Other potential benefits

The pilots will then be formally reviewed and a full scheme will follow if successful.

Technology Assurance Scheme (TAS)

TAS aims to ensure that businesses of all sizes involved in the import of POAO/ABP can become a Trusted Trader and gain proportionate benefits.

This will be a 'light touch' scheme, aimed at those without the infrastructure to conduct their own checks, whereby a business can gain proportionately reduced checks by providing the government with additional assurance data.

To support small and medium enterprises it is intended that TAS will have proportionate application requirements and membership fees.

For the scheme to be viable and attractive to SMEs there must be consideration into the cost of technology which allows for providing assurance data.

TAS Membership Criteria

Further testing/ stakeholder engagement will be used to establish the final membership criteria but as a minimum, Technology Assurance Scheme members will:

- Be registered or approved by their local authority, the Food Standards Agency or Food Standards Scotland as a food business or registered with, or approved by, Animal Plant and Health Agency as an animal by-product business;
- Have no adverse Sanitary and Phytosanitary compliance history;
- Have a record of pre-notifications since January 2022 (other than companies importing solely from the island of Ireland); and
- Have no adverse customs compliance history.

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TAS Proposals

TAS will build on from the Cabinet Office's Ecosystem of Trust pilots to consider how the technology and devices which consortia demonstrated could be utilised as assurance data.

Assurance data demonstrated included:

- Journey assurance data in the form of digital seals which demonstrates transportation have not been tampered with or damaged
- Quality assurance data such as environmental container data evidencing temperature maintenance
- Earlier notification and ability to upload documentation in advance of arrival

However, there is a need to conduct further tests and explore other technology, especially those which provide animal health assurances as well as food safety, to mitigate risk sufficiently so that reduced check benefits can be offered.

Feedback to Date

From conversations with stakeholders, we have received feedback on the current approach:

ATTS feedback

- There are limited benefits to the scheme
- Self-checking will only be feasible for a limited number of businesses, with sufficient resources how have high volumes of trade.

TAS feedback

- Accessing the scheme may be costly,
- Many SMEs many not currently have access to technology required to join the scheme
- Concerns around plugging into Government systems.

ATTS Modular Approach

- Based off of feedback we have received, we have looked at exploring a more flexible approach, developing one scheme for all.
- There will be minimum requirements to be a trusted trader, as well as a set of benefits, each with specific requirements to be met to obtain these.
- Trusted Traders could apply for one or more benefits as long as they meet the specific criteria.
- Additional benefits could be built up over time by a trader.
- Flexible model - additional benefits could be added as they are developed/ piloted.
- Instead of a stand-alone technology scheme, we are looking to pilot a technology benefit which if successful would form part of this approach.

This is not Government policy. We are looking to explore this idea and gain feedback before pursuing it further.

New Modular Approach Example 2.

