

Covid response measures for meat official controls

Information on the meat official controls measures available to competent authorities in Great Britain in relation to slaughterhouses to help maintain the food supply chain while protecting consumer safety and animal welfare.

[Retained Regulation \(EU\) 2020/466](#) relating to Great Britain (as amended by [The Official Controls \(Animals, Feed and Food, Plant Health etc.\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#) and [The Official Controls \(Temporary Measures\) \(Coronavirus\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2021](#)) provides competent authorities with the ability to introduce measures within strict legal parameters to address serious disruptions to official control systems arising from the Covid pandemic.

Article 2 of the retained regulation requires measures taken by competent authorities in Great Britain to be published online. The measures relating to meat official controls are listed below.

Under a tiered contingency approach established early in the pandemic, these measures are available for use by competent authorities only when other options made pursuant to retained Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on Official Controls (as amended) have been exhausted.

Measures relating to meat official controls

Official Veterinarian-led official controls delivered in approved meat establishments: Flexibilities available to competent authorities in Great Britain Under Article 3 of retained Regulation (EU) 2020/466 (as amended):

- i. The relevant competent authority may permit trainee Official Auxiliaries (OAs) to undertake certain low risk inspection tasks under the supervision of an Official Veterinarian (OV) or OA.
- ii. The relevant competent authority may permit ante-mortem inspection to be carried out by an OA who is a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MRCVS) .
- iii. The relevant competent authority may permit delayed post-mortem inspection (cold inspection) of animals at low capacity establishments to be carried out by an OA.
- iv. The relevant competent authority may appoint former OAs and OVs now working as food business operator (FBO) staff, to carry out limited activities to support post-mortem inspection (PMI) under supervision of OVs at specific red meat plants.

Northern Ireland

Under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol, certain EU law, including Regulation (EU) 2020/466 (as amended) applies directly in Northern Ireland. Under EU law, the above measures are similarly available to the competent authority for use where necessary in Northern Ireland. At present, these measures are available to the competent authority in Northern Ireland as part of the same tiered approach.