

Meat official control charges: proposal to remove plan inspection assistant discount

Consultation summary page

Date launched:	14/12/2018	Closing date:	25/01/2019
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Who will this consultation be of most interest to?

This consultation proposes the removal of the supplementary discount for poultry slaughterhouse Food Business Operators with Plant Inspection Assistant systems and an adjustment to the core meat industry discount to mitigate any impact.

What is the subject of this consultation?

Poultry or rabbit slaughterhouse Food Business Operator and meat industry representative organisations.

What is the purpose of this consultation?

The proposed change will remove an administrative burden from the industry and the FSA. Action is proposed to mitigate the likely financial impact.

When the current system of discounts on meat official control charges was introduced in 2016/17 the core discount to poultry and red meat slaughterhouses, and game handling establishments, was supplemented by an extra discount for poultry premises operating Plant Inspection Assistant (PIA) systems. Under such systems PIAs employed by Food Business Operators (FBOs) carry out some official controls under the supervision and direction of the FSA Official Veterinarian. FBOs can make claims for a supplementary discount in recognition of their costs for the time their staff spend carrying out official controls.

The supplementary PIA discount was developed by industry stakeholders who were members of the Steering Group on Meat Charging. The PIA discount was intended to act as an incentive for FBOs to switch from Meat Hygiene Inspectors (MHIs) to PIAs. It sought to do this by ensuring that the official controls charges for an FBO making such a switch would be no higher than if they used MHIs and they could be lower.

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It is proposed that the PIA element of the official controls charges discount is removed for the following main reasons:

1. The process is administratively burdensome for FBOs and the FSA with information required from FBOs on an annual and monthly basis. This data is collated, validated and processed by the FSA for inclusion in the charges calculation.
2. The supplementary discount was developed by meat industry stakeholders as part of the Steering Group on Meat Charging's work as an incentive for poultry and rabbit slaughterhouses to switch to PIAs. There has been no discernible impact attributable to the discount on decisions by FBOs that they wish to switch to PIAs.
3. The value of the PIA discount in 2017/18 was less than £32,000 across the industry but approximately 70% of this was received by four FBOs. The discount is greatest where the costs of the PIAs are relatively high.

Action is proposed to mitigate the impact on the poultry sector by maintaining the overall proportion split of discounts between the poultry, red meat and game sectors. Specific estimates have been sent to the poultry FBOs affected.

The purpose of this consultation is to receive views and further information from the industry on this proposed change and its potential impact.

Responses to this consultation should be sent to:

Name: Richard Collier

Division/Branch: Head of Finance –
Charging

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

Tel: 01904 232144

Email: finance.consultation@food.gov.uk

Postal address:

PIA Consultation

Finance

Food Standards Agency

Foss House

Kings Pool

Peasholme Green

York

YO1 7PR

Impact Assessment

Yes

No **See Annex A for reason.**

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Detail of consultation

Introduction

This consultation proposes the removal of the supplementary discount for poultry slaughterhouse Food Business Operators with Plant Inspection Assistant systems and an adjustment to the core meat industry discount to mitigate any impact.

Consultation audience

Poultry or rabbit slaughterhouse Food Business Operator and meat industry representative organisations.

Consultation purpose

The proposed change will remove an administrative burden from the industry and the FSA. Action is proposed to mitigate the likely financial impact.

When the current system of discounts on meat official control charges was introduced in 2016/17 the core discount to poultry and red meat slaughterhouses, and game handling establishments, was supplemented by an extra discount for poultry premises operating Plant Inspection Assistant (PIA) systems. Under such systems PIAs employed by Food Business Operators (FBOs) carry out some official controls under the supervision and direction of the FSA Official Veterinarian. FBOs can make claims for a supplementary discount in recognition of their costs for the time their staff spend carrying out official controls.

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It is proposed that the PIA element of the official controls charges discount is removed for the following main reasons:

The process is administratively burdensome for FBOs and the FSA with information required from FBOs on an annual and monthly basis. This data is collated, validated and processed by the FSA for inclusion in the charges calculation.

The supplementary discount was developed by meat industry stakeholders as part of the Steering Group on Meat Charging's work as an incentive for poultry and rabbit

slaughterhouses to switch to PIAs. There has been no discernible impact attributable to the discount on decisions by FBOs that they wish to switch to PIAs.

The value of the PIA discount in 2017/18 was less than £32,000 across the industry but approximately 70% of this was received by four FBOs. The discount is greatest where the costs of the PIAs are relatively high.

Action is proposed to mitigate the impact on the poultry sector by maintaining the overall proportion split of discounts between the poultry, red meat and game sectors. Specific estimates have been sent to the poultry FBOs affected.

The purpose of this consultation is to receive views and further information from the industry on this proposed change and its potential impact.

Thank you on behalf of the FSA for participating in this public consultation.

Yours faithfully,

Richard Collier

Head of Finance – Charging

Enclosed Documents

Annex A: Letter issues to interested parties (For England and Wales or Northern Ireland)

Annex B: Policy Impact estimate

Standard Consultation Information

Publication of personal data and confidentiality of responses

1. In accordance with the FSA principle of openness we shall keep a copy of the completed consultation and responses, to be made available to the public on receipt of a request to the [FSA Consultation Coordinator](#). The FSA will publish a summary of responses, which may include your full name. Disclosure of any other personal data would be made only upon request for the full consultation responses. If you do not want this information to be released, please complete and return the Publication of Personal Data form, which is on the website at <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/worddocs/dataprotection.doc> Return of this form does not mean that we will treat your response to the consultation as confidential, just your personal data.
3. In accordance with the provisions of Freedom of Information Act 2000/Environmental Information Regulations 2004, all information contained in your response may be subject to publication or disclosure. If you consider that some of the information provided in your response should not be disclosed, you should indicate the information concerned, request that it is not disclosed and explain what harm you consider would result from disclosure. The final decision on whether the information should be withheld rests with the FSA. However, we will take into account your views when making this decision.
4. Any automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be considered as such a request unless you specifically include a request, with an explanation, in the main text of your response.

Further information

5. An Impact Assessment has not been included in this consultation as this will be developed during the consultation process with industry evidence.
6. Please contact us if you require this consultation in an alternative format such as Braille or large print.
7. **This consultation has been prepared in accordance with HM Government consultation principles¹.**

¹ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/bre/consultation-guidance>