

ANNEX

**Response of the Competent Authorities of the Falkland Islands to the recommendations of Report ref. DG(SANCO)/2012-6519-MR of an audit carried out from 10 to 14 September 2012 in order to evaluate the control systems in place governing the production of fishery products intended for export to the European Union**

N°.	Recommendation	Action Proposed by the Competent Authority (08/02/2013)
1	<p>The CA should ensure that standards at least equivalent to the ones laid down in section VIII, Chapter V of Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 are applied, in order to provide the guarantees that all fishery products exported to the EU comply with the requirements set out in the export health certificate, in particular as regard to the health standards concerning the organoleptic properties and TVB-N.</p>	<p>New legislation will be introduced in the Falkland Islands to address all the concerns raised in the audit report. The new legislation will deal with previously omitted provisions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirements to be observed by FBOs in relation to organoleptic properties, histamine and TVB-N (Reg (EC ) 853/2004)</li> <li>• Improved HACCPs (Reg(EC) 852/2004) (NB from limited inspection carried out in 2013 there is already a noticeable improvement in FBO HACCP plans)</li> <li>• Official controls concerning freshness indicators and histamine levels.</li> </ul> <p>A realistic timescale in which to formulate detailed policy instructions, secure priority in the legislative programme and draft and pass the new legislation is probably about 12 months (ie by the end of 2013).</p>
2	<p>The CA should ensure that the standards use for the official control of fishery products are equivalent to the requirements set out in Chapter II of Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 in order to provide the guarantees that fishery products exported to the EU comply with the requirements set out in the export health certificate, in particular as regards to the official controls.</p>	<p>All the official controls required in Chapter II of Annex III to Reg (EC) 852/2004 will be carried out from the start of 2013. Although these requirements may take some time to be legislated for they can be quickly added to existing departmental SOPs. Three of the five required checks are already done (organoleptic checks, residue and contaminant monitoring, microbiological checks); the other two will be done in future ie freshness indicators and histamine. The only species of fish which is caught in FI waters that requires histamine testing belongs to the Merlucciidae family.</p>

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3	The CA should ensure that fishery products exported to the EU are produced and dispatched only from facilities (including reefer vessels) listed in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 (EU listed), and that those listed facilities fully comply with rules considered equivalent to the relevant EU requirements.	This is already largely in place although occasional lapses in control procedures were noted during the audit. The CA will tighten up its procedures and will introduce a regime of periodic internal audits by the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) internal Audit Section. The issue of sending fishery products only in “approved” reefer vessels is an ongoing one and a satisfactory means of ensuring a solution has been discussed with the EU itself. The issue is “global” and not limited to the Falkland Islands. During the EU audit it was noted that fishery products from EU registered vessels were being transhipped to non approved reefer vessels alongside FI fishery products.
4	The CA should ensure that all facilities involved in the production chain of fishery products to be exported to the EU have in place, implement and maintain permanent procedures based on HACCP principles in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 (in particular Article 5) and as required by the export health certificate defined in Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005.	All FBOs have already been notified about the need to have an up to date and complete HACCP plan on board each vessel. From a number of inspections already carried out in 2013 it would appear that FBOs have revised their HACCP plans with the result that the HACCP plans inspected this season have improved dramatically. Both of the CA inspection officers will be attending HACCP training courses (endorsed by the EU) during 2013.
5	The CA should ensure the reliability of the health certification of fishery products to be exported to the EU, taking into account the requirements of Directive 96/93/EC, Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005.	The concerns expressed in the audit report have been noted and already acted upon. From 2013 onwards health certificates will be issued using the TRACES system. Original certificates will be identified by use of an embossing stamp which will be kept under secure control. The SOP dealing with issuance of certificates has already been updated.

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6	The CA should ensure that laboratories performing official analyses for microbiology are assessed and that adequate quality controls are in place to provide for the reliability of test results (Codex Alimentarius, CAC/GL 26-1997).	The process of accreditation of FIG's Public Health Laboratory to ISO 17025 standard is proceeding. The lab is being assessed by UKAS (the UK Accreditation Service) and the process of accreditation is divided into 3 stages. The lab is currently at the stage of initial assessment during which all the written procedures are fully assessed. This will be followed by a pre-assessment and then a full assessment visit by inspectors from UKAS. It is hoped that full assessment and accreditation may have taken place by June 2013.