



End of Place of First Arrival (POFA) scheme

The Place of First Arrival (POFA) scheme was previously developed as part of wider Government 'Day 1 No Deal' (D1ND) preparations. The scheme was aimed at facilitating plant health checks of non-EU goods transiting via the EU on route to the UK. As the transition period ends and we enter a new relationship with the EU, the POFA scheme is no longer required.

APHA are directly contacting all operators authorised as a POFA to let them know the scheme is coming to an end. They will use the contact details provided by the operator to APHA when the POFA scheme was launched.

From 1 January 2021, new requirements will apply to the import of [high-priority](#) plants and plant products from the EU to the UK. Importers may now use the Place of Destination (POD) scheme if planning to import high priority plants and plant products from January 2021.

Places of Destination may be used for the purpose of plant health physical inspections of EU high priority regulated plants and products until 30 June 2021, as from 1 July 2021, all physical checks on regulated goods will take place at Border Control Posts. There are certain requirements in order to be registered as a POD to facilitate physical checks on EU high priority goods, which are set out on gov.uk.

End of Place of First Arrival (POFA) scheme and start of Place of Destination (POD) scheme Q&A

Why were POFAs initially established?

The POFA scheme was developed as part of wider Government 'Day 1 No Deal' (D1ND) preparations. The scheme was aimed at facilitating plant health checks of non-EU goods transiting via the EU on route to the UK.

Why is the POFA scheme ending?

The POFA scheme was part of D1ND planning and preparedness. As we enter a new relationship with the EU the POFA scheme is no longer legally required due to post transition planning.

Will I need to do anything as a result of the POFA scheme ending?

APHA will be directly contacting all those currently registered as a POFA to let them know the scheme is coming to an end. They will use the contact details provided when the POFA scheme was launched. APHA will also ask the current registered POFAs to confirm whether they would like to join the POD scheme from January 2021 onwards. We ask that if you are contacted that you respond to the email confirming you are happy to move over to the POD scheme.

What scheme will replace POFA?

The POFA scheme is not being replaced, rather it is coming to an end. The POD scheme is being introduced as a temporary arrangement from January 2021 until new Border Control Posts (BCPs) are in place in July 2021. Further guidance can be found at GOV.UK.



How do I join the POD scheme?

Those currently registered to the POFA scheme will be contacted directly by APHA. They will ask for confirmation that you are happy to register to the POD scheme.

If you were not previously registered as a POFA, you will need to meet the minimum requirements and complete the registration process outlined on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Will there be any charges for me moving from the POFA to the POD scheme?

There are no charges associated with the end of POFA scheme and no charges to register with the POD scheme.

What are the minimum requirements for a POD?

The minimum requirements in order to register as a POD are set out on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). These are also outlined below.

An operator who wants to act as a POD for physical inspections on EU regulated plants and plant products from 1 January 2021 must meet certain requirements:

Transport and storage

- The operator must ensure that during transport to, and storage at, the POD the consignment is:
 - not tampered with or subject to any alteration or change of packaging
 - closed and sealed properly to reduce the risk of pest infestation and cross-contamination
- The consignment must not leave the POD before the competent authority has completed the plant health import checks (documentary, identity and physical).
- Inspectors must have access to a safe, demarcated area on site to conduct the inspection and there must be systems for safe working in place.
- Staff have to be available to present the consignment for inspection.

Equipment

- You must have suitable equipment available for the type and volume of physical inspection required, including:
 - handling equipment to enable regulated material to be unloaded or loaded as necessary
 - inspection table
 - adequate light source
 - equipment to enable fumigant gas testing for forestry sector consignments
 - access to toilets and handwashing facilities for inspectors

What POFA records will need to be kept on our side?

You do not need to keep any POFA documentation as the scheme is coming to an end.



How will I find out if I have been successfully registered as a POD?

The ending of the POFA scheme and start of the POD scheme is an administrative process that will take place internally within APHA. APHA will provide a receipt to confirm the POD registration process is complete.

How long will the POD scheme last?

The POD scheme is specific to the phased import regime which is in place until July 2021. EU high priority plants will be checked at PODs from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021. From 1 July 2021 onwards, import checks will take place at Border Control Posts (BCPs).

What will happen when the use of POD for EU high priority plants comes to an end on 30 June 2021?

These goods will enter through a BCP and undergo physical checks at the BCP.

Will I be charged for checks at POD?

HMT policy is that charges for statutory services should achieve full cost recovery. More details on current fees are available [here](#). Information about import inspection fees for goods originating in the EU will be published in due course.

What material can be inspected at a POD?

Only high priority plants will be checked at PODs. The list of high priority plants can be found at [GOV.UK](#).