

UFAS Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSAL FEED ASSURANCE SCHEME



Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of UFAS Update. In this edition we provide an update on our actions in light of Covid-19 and initial feedback following the implementation of UFAS 2020.

I do hope you find UFAS Update informative. If you have any questions about the items included or potential articles for future editions, then please contact us via the details on the back page.



Simon Williams

Technical Manager for AIC Services

Coronavirus and UFAS

So much has changed since the end of 2019, when the previous edition of UFAS Update was written. Back then, most of us had never heard of Wuhan or coronaviruses. I certainly did not expect a tragic global event like this to dominate all of our thoughts and actions, and fundamentally change the way UFAS operates.

We will provide more detail on how the auditing process is operating later in this publication, but it is also worth noting how the feed industry has been viewed through this crisis.

An early step that AIC took was to ensure that government officials saw the feed industry as a vital part of the agrifood supply chain. Any planned restrictions would need to take this into account and ensure that feed could continue to be made and delivered.

The nature of managing assurance schemes dictates that the focus

is often on correcting things that are going wrong. In spite of the dreadful toll that this pandemic has taken, it is important that we also take time to appreciate the efforts made across the industry to protect our workers whilst keeping animals fed. I am extremely proud of the feed industry that I have the pleasure to work with, and I think that everyone involved should be too!

For more detailed information, please visit our Coronavirus Update webpage: www.agindustries.org.uk/coronavirus/assurance/



Remote Auditing

As the significant impacts of the coronavirus outbreak on the movement of people became apparent, AIC took an initial decision to suspend auditing of all Trade Assurance Schemes. The certification bodies and AIC then worked to develop a new approach to enable certification to continue.

Lloyds Register (LR) began carrying out remote audits of UFAS participants in April. Feedback from participants and auditors has been generally positive. We wish to thank everyone who has taken part – to change a scheme's auditing process in under three weeks is a major achievement for all involved.

As with the previous physical audits, the auditor contacts you to arrange a date/time for the audit to take place. They will also now explain how the audit will be conducted and arrange a convenient method of communication.

The remote auditing process grants the ability to upload documents to the UFAS Portal in advance of the audit day, ensuring the process is as speedy as possible. More information on using the UFAS portal can be found below.

On the day of the audit, the auditor will use a bespoke LR app to carry out the audit, which will need to be downloaded to a smartphone prior to the audit starting. Via this app, the auditor will be able to talk to and hear the participant, but also take still images using the camera as a record of the audit. This is particularly useful during the site tour element of the audit. Other than the use of the app, the audit process follows the same pattern as an "in-person" audit, with an opening meeting, review of documentation, site tour and closing meeting to discuss any non-conformances. Audit reports will also be produced in the usual way,

and corrective action timescales remain unchanged.

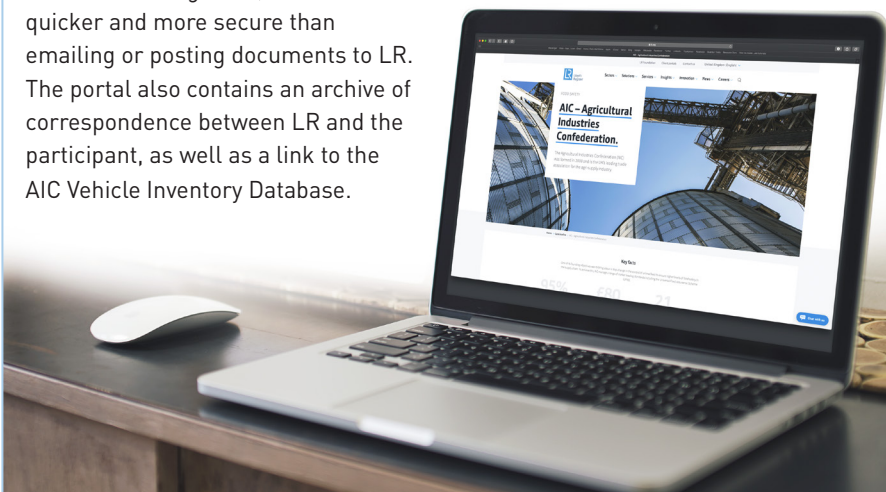
The aim is that the full scope of a UFAS participants' activities will be covered during the remote audit. However, where this is not possible (for example due to a poor mobile phone signal), a follow-up visit will need to be arranged to cover any additional points.

Whilst the remote auditing approach has been forced upon AIC by the coronavirus restrictions, we are keen to take whatever positives we can from the situation. Any feedback from participants subject to a remote audit about what worked well and what could be improved would be gratefully received – please send any comments via the contact details on the back page. At this stage, it is assumed that onsite audits will restart at some point, but some elements of the remote audit approach may be adopted to reduce auditor time on the site.

Use of the UFAS Portal

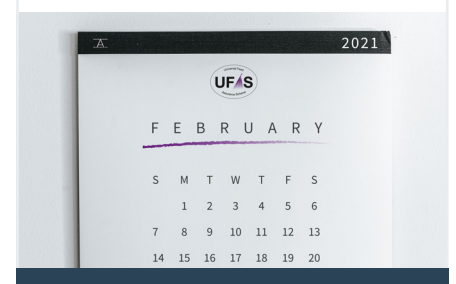
Lloyds Register (LR) have developed a portal for UFAS participants with a number of functions. One of these is a filing system that allows participants to find key documents easily during an audit. With the start of remote auditing, this functionality was extended to allow the upload of documents against specific clauses of the UFAS Standard, in order to make the audit process more streamlined. The upload function has been updated and improved in light of feedback from early users of the system, who requested a faster process for adding documents. Additional comments and suggestions for improvements are always welcome.

Another area of the portal allows participants to upload evidence of corrective actions following audit, which is quicker and more secure than emailing or posting documents to LR. The portal also contains an archive of correspondence between LR and the participant, as well as a link to the AIC Vehicle Inventory Database.



TASCC Review Process

A new version of the TASCC scheme is due for implementation in February 2021. The UFAS Review Group have been closely involved in the drafting process, assisting to align the requirements of the AIC schemes more closely with each other. The discussions have been constructive and will result in a more user friendly TASCC scheme. There will be a public consultation later in 2020, and UFAS participants are encouraged to find time to read the TASCC documents and provide their feedback.



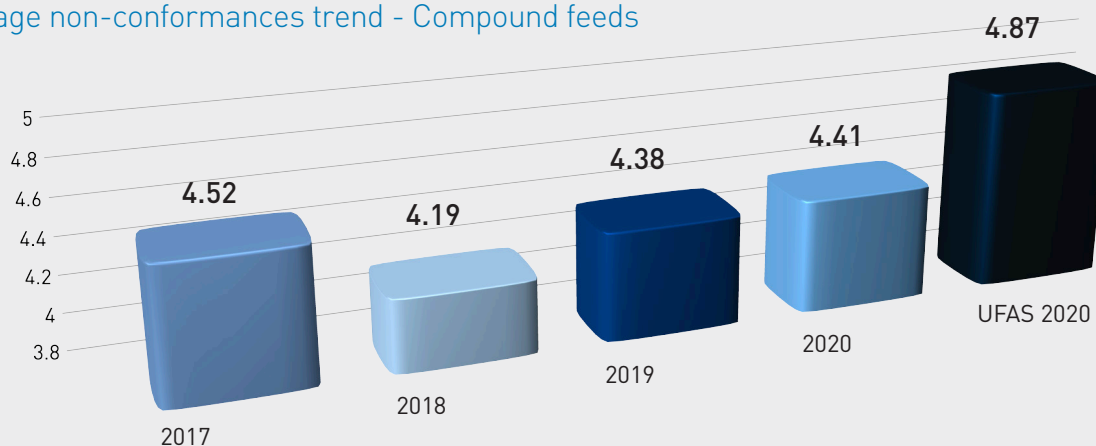
UFAS 2020 is live

Auditing to the new UFAS 2020 Standard started on 2nd March. To date, the transition has gone smoothly, in spite of the obvious challenges facing the industry. AIC and Lloyds Register (LR) are monitoring the non-conformances being raised, in terms of total numbers and relevant clauses in order to identify any trends (good or bad). So far, there has been a small increase in non-conformances overall, mainly due to new requirements such as the use of lubricants

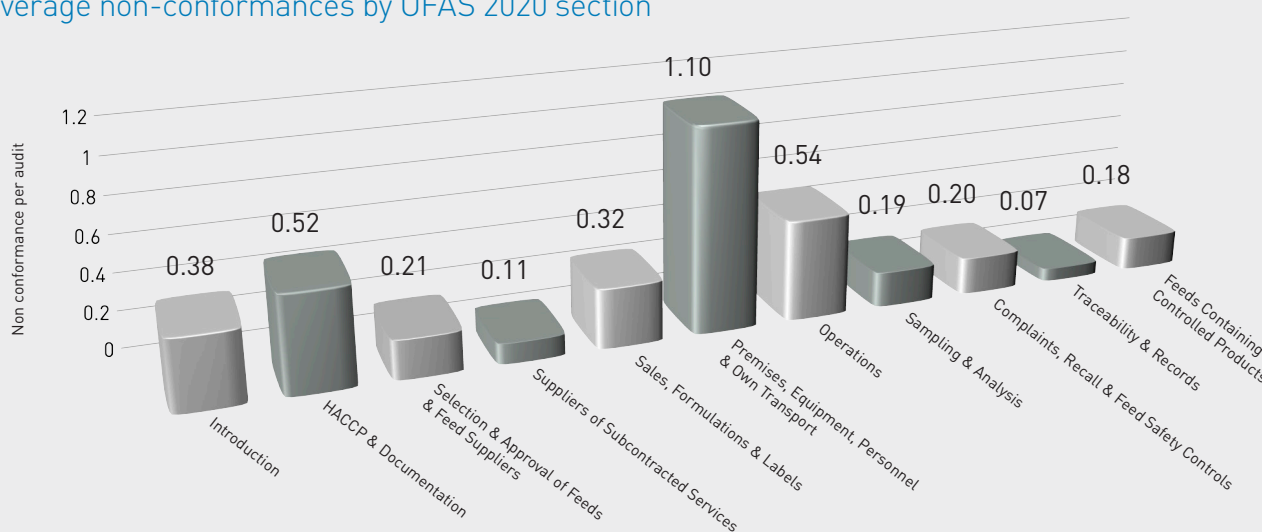
suitable for feed/ food contact and the requirement to maintain the vehicle inventory via the portal. Otherwise, there have been no unexpected results.

Following the implementation of UFAS 2020, a number of participants have asked for updated internal audit forms to follow the new scheme layout. These are now available on the UFAS pages of the AIC website.

Average non-conformances trend - Compound feeds



Average non-conformances by UFAS 2020 section



Short Notice and Unannounced Audits

Alongside the introduction of the UFAS 2020 Standard was a change in the certification rules, requiring each UFAS site to have an additional short notice audit once every three years. Due to the coronavirus restrictions, the implementation of these short notice audits has been delayed but will commence later in the year as restrictions ease. Typically, participants will be informed that they have a short notice audit the working day before. As previously communicated, there is a possibility to charge a cancellation fee if the participant does not accommodate the audit. It is therefore important that participants contact LR if ongoing coronavirus controls – or any other site-specific issues – would prevent the hosting of a short notice audit.

In addition, a sample of sites will be subject to an unannounced audit in any given year. Since the coronavirus restrictions, no unannounced audits have been carried out. However, AIC has ongoing dialogue with the UK authorities to share information where there is concern about feed safety.



Working with APHA on Salmonella

AIC has been working with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and its predecessors for a number of years to assist the feed industry in managing the risk of Salmonella. Following the withdrawal of the authorisation to use formaldehyde in animal feed, AIC and APHA have renewed efforts to ensure that feed businesses have access to guidance on how to manage Salmonella, how to make use of the free serotyping offered by APHA, and the

information APHA require about positive samples to assist their investigations.

The UK has followed an approach of voluntary cooperation between the industry and authorities for a number of years. The need for effective communication is only likely to become greater as the UK seeks to agree new trade deals following our leaving the EU. With this in mind, it is important that all UFAS participants in the UK ensure that:

03

Businesses continually review their Salmonella sampling regime and results, while following up on any positives



01

Their chosen laboratory has been instructed to inform APHA of any positives and to provide the isolate for serotyping



02

Each sample for Salmonella testing is submitted to the laboratory with sufficient information for the laboratory to complete the form which accompanies the isolate to APHA



Earned Recognition continues

AIC first signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Earned Recognition (ER) in 2014 with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD). Upon its formation, Food Standards Scotland (FSS) also became a signatory, and in the intervening years there has been an ongoing and fruitful dialogue between all parties. This has also resulted in a reduction of official inspections carried out at UFAS participants' premises.

Following the enforced move to remote auditing, meetings signatories have become more frequent as the authorities sought reassurance that, in spite of the restrictions, participants were still able to demonstrate compliance to the scheme, and hence to legal requirements.

National Food Crime Unit contact

AIC has recently renewed contact with the FSA National Food Crime Unit (NFCU). Discussions concentrate primarily on general trends in the feed supply chain, including horizon scanning for potential changes/disruptions to the market that could lead to an opportunity or incentive to commit feed fraud. AIC is happy to act as a first point of contact if a participant has specific concerns or information about fraudulent activity. This can be done by either completing the "Tell AIC" form on the website or by calling AIC.



For further information on COVID-19 at: www.agindustries.org.uk/coronavirus/



Agricultural Industries Confederation Ltd
Confederation House, East of England Showground,
Peterborough, PE2 6XE
Tel: 01733 385230
Fax: 01733 385270

Email: aicservices@agindustries.org.uk

