

# Common cattle and sheep identification breaches and tips to help with compliance

Cross compliance is a set of rules made up of 'Statutory Management Requirements' (SMRs) and 'Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions' (GAECs) that must be adhered to in order to receive CAP support payments. The Scottish Government is required by EU law to carry out cross compliance inspections to ensure that farmers (and other land managers) are meeting the various requirements.

Scottish Government statistics from cross compliance inspections have revealed that cattle identification and registration (SMR 7) and sheep and goat identification (SMR 8) are the most commonly breached requirements. This document highlights the common reasons for non-compliance and includes some tips to help ensure you don't fall foul of the rules.

**Cattle identification and registration (SMR 7)** - The aim of SMR 7 is to maintain a system for the identification, registration and traceability of cattle.

*Common reasons for non-compliance include:*

- Missing ear tags and/or animals incorrectly tagged.
- Failure to report movements within 3 days and deaths within 7 days.
- Mandatory information missing from records, animals registered with incorrect date of birth, sex or breed, no recorded death dates and/or movement details incorrectly reported.
- Passport present on the farm but animal not found.

*Tips to improve compliance:*

- Regularly check cattle for illegible or lost ear tags and replace them within 28 days of discovery.
- Use Cattle Tracing System (CTS) online to register cattle births and report cattle deaths and movements within the appropriate timescales.
- Regularly count all cattle on the farm and cross check that the same number is in your herd register and is on CTS online. If there are any discrepancies, correct them immediately.
- If an animal is lost or stolen ensure that you return the passport within 7 days of becoming aware that it was lost or stolen.

**Sheep and goat identification (SMR 8)** - The aim of SMR 8 is to maintain a system for the identification, registration and traceability of sheep and goats.

*Common reasons for non-compliance include:*

- Failure to replace lost or illegible identification and/or record of replacement identification has not been maintained.
- Animals have not been tagged or have been incorrectly tagged before leaving the holding.
- Failure to record death details of animals born or identified after 31/12/2009.
- Number of animals counted indicates that records are not accurate and/or flock marks of purchased animals have not been included in records.
- Annual inventory as at 1<sup>st</sup> December has not been recorded by 30<sup>th</sup> December.

*Tips to improve compliance*

- Check sheep regularly for lost identification and replace them within 28 days of discovery or before the animal leaves the holding, if this is sooner.
- Record replacement details, movements or deaths as soon as they occur.
- Following an accurate gathering of stock e.g. tugging, dipping or clipping time, update your records so the number of sheep on the holding is reflected in your records.

Failure to comply with SMRs or GAECs can result in financial penalties being applied to CAP support payments. Knowing and adhering to the rules will help to avoid any unnecessary penalties. Detailed information on cross compliance including verifiable standards and inspection statistics is available at:

<https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/inspections/all-inspections/cross-compliance/detailed-guidance/>

