



**Peach and ALV System :-
Contingency plans for business delivery in the event
of IT malfunction**

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Author	Ian Hewett

1. Introduction:

The Peach system is an internet based system allowing importers and agents, as required under EC legislation, to notify RPA and Fera of all imports. These imports being plant products and plant materials from third Countries (i.e. outside of the European Union) subject to control under Marketing Standards or Plant Health legislation.

Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) require a Certificate of Conformity (for products covered by Specific Marketing Standards) or a Quarantine Release Certificate (for products covered by Plant Health movement controls) before goods can be cleared into free circulation within the EU. ALV (Automatic Licence Verification) operates between Peach and the HMRC Chief system. ALV allows Peach to notify Chief of the existence of a certificate of conformity or a quarantine release certificate. Thereby removing the need for paper copies of these documents to be faxed to HMRC. The clearance time is as a result reduced significantly. From 16 February 2010 all applications to Peach will be routed via ALV.

The Peach system allows importers and agents to obtain these documents through the system, as follows:

Conformity Certificates

- Low risk consignments - Certificate will immediately be available for printing, or clearance via ALV, from the trader/agents peach screen.
- Medium risk consignments – An inspector will need to consider the risk and either release (allow a certificate to be printed as above) or stop the consignment for inspection.
- High risk consignments – The consignment is stopped immediately and an inspection must be done before it can be released.

Quarantine Release Certificates

- Mandatory inspection goods (planting material, potatoes, grain and soil) are automatically held and will not be released without inspection.
- All other consignments will be automatically released at the end of the Service Standard times for the point of entry, unless the Inspector has held the consignment for inspection.

Following automatic release or an inspection, where no problem is found ALV will notify Chief that the goods are cleared for free circulation. A certificate may be printed if required.

If the consignment is found not to be in conformity, the inspector will inform the agent and importer and issue a document explaining why. The importer or agent will then have to supply an undertaking (applied for through Peach) as to how they intend to bring the consignment back into conformity). For problems relating to plant health matters, the inspector will inform the agent

and importer of what action is required. In both of these cases the result will not go via ALV and documentation will need to be faxed to HMRC.

The Peach system is administered by IBM on behalf of RPA and Fera. In addition a number of other organisations such as Single Sign On and the Government Gateway have responsibility for aspects of the operation of Peach.

2. Business needs:

Peach needs to be available 24 hours a day and 7 seven days a week for every day of the year. It needs to be available for external web users to allow them to notify RPA or Fera. It needs to be available to internal inspector and administrative users to allow them access and process this information.

In order to monitor and inspect high risk consignments RPA and Fera have staff available at the major import points. Imports at smaller points of entry may take slightly longer to be inspected.

When Peach is working normally the staff resource to meet these requirements is in place.

RPA and Fera will as far as possible minimise delays to any consignment, but neither RPA or Fera can accept responsibility for the deterioration of any consignment.

Any planned down times to Peach or any other system that will affect the working of Peach will be advertised on the front page of Peach, if we have been notified of these times.

Before an advertised downtime inspectors will endeavour to ensure that any consignments already on the system are cleared. This will be done either by changing them to green or changing to red and making appropriate arrangements to inspect the consignment.

3. Contingencies:

When Peach or ALV is unavailable a series of arrangements are in place (see below) to ensure HMRC receive the necessary authorisation to allow consignments to clear into free circulation.

When an unexpected problem first arises –

If Peach or ALV is unavailable or there is an error, making the system unworkable. The problem is usually highlighted by a user or inspector informing either Helpdesk.

In the first 2 hours:

Either Helpdesk or an inspector will ring the IBM Helpdesk. A call reference is given to the caller. The IBM Helpdesk will contact the relevant IBM staff to investigate the problem. The IBM Helpdesk will allocate a priority to the call, dependant on the number of affected users. In addition HMRC should be contacted so they can investigate their systems.

During the first 1 or 2 hours inspectors and the Helpdesk will continue to advise traders of the problem and any known resolution period. This information may be displayed on the website or e-mailed to users. Inspectors continue to administer consignments depending on there priority and risk for each consignment.

After 2 hours - Peach Helpdesk and/or Fera Helpdesk will either:

Agree to delay initiating manual fallback if they are informed by IBM or HMRC that the problem is expected to be fixed imminently (to be followed by a further review after a maximum of 1 hour if no subsequent resolution), OR

Initiate manual fallback (This means that phytosanitary certificates for PHSI/Fera; and manual conformity certificates for HMI/RPA need to be faxed to HMRC). As follows:

- On the Marketing Standards side inspectors will, depending on priority and risk issue manual certificates for consignments. Importers/agents will be asked to enter the consignment details onto an application form and then fax or e-mail this to the office indicated. Upon receipt of these documents, inspectors will produce a certificate and return to the sender. These documents can then be passed to HMRC along with all other required documentation to facilitate clearance.
- For Plant Health consignments, if PEACH is working, there may be a communication problem between PEACH and the e-Domero system. There is a comms link between the 2 systems that continually repeats/tries again to get the information through. If this does not work within a short timescale there is a 'bypass facility' that allows the trader to produce a QRC without a result from an Inspector. If PEACH is not working Inspectors will manually raise Quarantine Release Certificates from the information already available on PEACH

Peach Help Desk & Fera Imports Helpdesk will each notify NCH separately and each other of their decision to initiate fall-back (to be done by phone/email).

During this time the Peach Helpdesk will be contacting IBM to find out progress on fixing the problem. The IBM Helpdesk will also contact either Helpdesk during this time to inform them of progress made.

After 4 - 6 hours:

Manual production of certificates will continue. At very busy offices such as Heathrow additional staff will be called in to help. This will either be by bringing in additional staff or by arranging for remotely located inspectors to deal with applications by e-mail or fax.

For Plant Health consignments, if PEACH is not working, we will authorise Inspectors to accept notification of imports via a 'paper' application emailed or faxed to dedicated mailboxes. Staff will manually raise QRC's from the information provided.

Between 6 – 24 hours:

Manual fallback will remain in place and arrangements will continue to ensure certificates are supplied to meet demand.

Policy meetings will take place between IBM, Fera, RPA and trade representatives to establish the likely length of the problem.

Between 1 and 7 Days:

If the problem is to continue for longer than 24 hours then it is likely that HMRC will be requested to withdraw their requirement for a certificate of conformity to release into free circulation. Any such withdrawal will be likely to last for a minimum of 7 days.

For Plant Health consignments we will seek agreement with HMRC to clear consignments of faxed copies of phytosanitary certificates so QRC's will not be necessary.

After 7 days:

Policy decisions will be made about how import procedures are taken forward if Peach is still unavailable. At this stage horticultural marketing inspection work will have moved from the ports to inland markets and depots to ensure that the necessary quality checks required by Marketing Standards are taking place.

For Plant Health consignments we will continue to clear consignments through Customs on the basis of a faxed phytosanitary certificate.

4. Conclusion.

Every effort will be made to ensure that consignments are not delayed, whilst at the same time ensuring that the UK maintains it's obligations under EC law.