PHIS Exports Testing Teleconference
Industry Meeting-September 12, 2017

Speakers:

Bill Smith, Assistant Administrator, OFO
Alexandra Tarrant, OFO
Anthony Quartieri, OCIO (contractor)
Dennis O'Brien, OCIO
Frances Byrd, OCIO

Moderator: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome and thank you for joining today's teleconference, "PHIS Exports Testing." Please note that all lines will be muted until the Q and A portion of the call. We will provide you with instructions on how to ask a question at that time. With that, I will turn the call over to Mr. Bill Smith, Assistant Administrator of the Office of Field Operations. Bill, please go ahead.

Bill
Smith: Thank you all for joining us this afternoon. This is part of our continuing process as far as last February when we talked about implementing the PHIS export component. Then we had a follow-up technical meeting in March. And we wanted to again discuss how we would be transferring information using the PHIS application with the industry. We sent out a message in July that we would be following up with testing for the industry.

As a quick reminder, in the March technical meeting, the industry had asked for us to have a process to test batching and interface with the PHIS export piece and so that's what we're going to be doing and talking to you about today. How we go about doing this testing.

As a rollout strategy, I just want to remind everybody we've published in the Federal Register notice in September that we're going to be phasing in the PHIS export module. And 19 countries have been identified for the first phase-in. We can get those countries to you, if you don't have those now. We can certainly follow that up. I'm sure that's on our webpage, the FSIS webpage, but let us know if you need those countries.

Then we're going to continue a rollout strategy over the next year, year and a half. As soon as we get all the additional 221 countries under PHIS.

What I want to talk to you today about is the testing that's going to start. We have two phases to this testing and we'll talk about phase one and phase two. Phase one will begin on September 20, 2017 and Alexandra Tarrant will be talking to you more about that shortly.

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But the phase one testing will only be testing the XML schema or the batching function. So an environment will be available to industry for testing of the computer to computer processing of XML batch files and uploading of the XML batch files into the PHIS system. Either as an export applicant, as a regulated facility or as an export broker.

And then the industry will be able to test the computer to computer file submission. And that testing will go pretty much from September 20 through November. And then phase two will start, which is the second piece you'll be talking about where the industry will be able to test the XML upload user-face for the complete round trip of sending in an application, either singularly or in batching and then round trip to where you can see that an export will be generated. That will start later in the year. Well, not this year. It'll start early next year, in January of 2018.

So for participation in this, starting on September 20th. Again, participation will be if there's – people are using PHIS in the regulatory environment, in the domestic environment – well, first let me say, all users will need eAuth level II. That's first and foremost. You cannot get into PHIS without an eAuth level II authorization.

Those that are already in PHIS, they're users. Those users and their roles will be copied into the test environment. Now, it's very important though, for anybody that's in the environment now, that you need to add or remove anybody that you do not want moved over by no later than close of business of Saturday, September 16th. Because after that anybody that is in the system will be moved.

So I also want to advise you that this is just for testing purposes and your convenience. For anybody that's already using PHIS. However, when we go into implementation, those roles will not be moved back into implementation. This is only for testing. For those new PHIS users, we have a process where FSIS will request individual contact information to the one user that will facilitate communication and support.

And you need to identify one tester to the PHISTechnicalQA@fsis.usda.gov mailbox. So we will need at least one tester identified and, I believe, the August 30 memo, which again we can get back to you, identifies the particular information that will be needed for that individual.

Lastly, we had received a number of questions from the February and March webinars. They have all been answered and addressed. And they will be posted on the PHIS webpage for the benefit of everyone very soon on the website. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Alexandra Tarrant.

Alexandra
Tarrant: Hi. Thank you for dialing in today. You all should have received a presentation yesterday evening via email which you can use to reference during today's call. But if you do look on, I believe it's slide 5, you will see the testing schedule, as

Mr. Smith mentioned in his opening remarks. We do plan on beginning testing September 20th.

You'll see several dates there on that slide because we did anticipate having a large number of testers. So we did break up the schedule into groups. So this first phase, as Mr. Smith said, will conclude in November. With the month of December serving only as a period to retest anything that may come up along the way with the earlier groups. Or, for those, who for some valid reason were unable to test in one of the earlier groups. That will be kind of our retest month, in December.

But we do want the testers to be assigned to those groups and we are doing that on a first-come first-serve basis, as we receive the contact information that we requested in the letter you all received August 30th. You may also have seen the request for this information in the Constituent Update, which has been published over the last couple of weeks.

So we do need you to send us the first and last names and position title of your testers, their valid email address, which should be the same address they use for their eAuth Level II account, their work hours, including the time zone, establishment number associated with testing, the business phone where they can be reached during work hours, the PHIS role that they are to be assigned, and the countries out of those 19 that they will be exporting to.

All this information should be sent to the PHISTechnicalQA@fsis.usda.gov mailbox. We recommend that you do not have more than three testers per establishment and that number three does include the export broker role tester. We will be sending out a URL to the test environment, to each group of testers before each testing group begins. But you will have to establish access and PHIS roles in the PHIS export environment. Then we will also be sending out a user guide to each test group that talks about access and roles, as well as test scripts for testers to follow during the testing.

As a pre-requisite for testing, testers must have an active eAuth Level II account. Instructions for how to obtain that, if that has not been done already, are in the August 30th memo that was sent out. There are also other system requirements. As far as software is concerned. And Joe will talk about that with the browsers or Anthony may chime in on that, too. So there are some other prerequisite requirements as far as your software. So I'll go ahead and turn it over to Anthony Quartieri, to talk about some of that.

Anthony
Quartieri: Good afternoon. So I am on slide six. And I'm going to briefly talk about test scripts, user guide, environment, and security. So the focus of our testing effort will first focus on the XML schema and the web service, commonly referred to as Export Batch, and then later on in the testing cycle there will be some more round-trip activity with the export applications and certificates.

As we mentioned, we will provide test scripts. They will be made available to participants. The test scripts cover various features in the functionality available to the test. These are step-by-step scenarios, test-based instructions that will walk you through the features and functionalities of the system. Typically, we recommend that you always go to the test scripts so that you understand the workflow and how things move through the system. As you become more comfortable with it, you don't always have to just stick with the script.

A user guide will be made available along with test scripts. The draft user guide, again to the participants, and earlier this summer, a preliminary XML specification and XSD was already made available. Briefly, the XML specification document described the XSD, each data element and its attributes.

So if you're going to be participating in the XML testing, it's important that you have that information, understand it, and have sent any of your questions over to the Q&A mailbox. The environment and security, as mentioned previously, you'll need an eAuth Level II account in order to register. As part of this test process, you will need to create and manage a service account as well. The test scripts and the user guide will go over how you manage and create service accounts in the test environment. And then I think a little bit later in the presentation, there's some information more specific on the industry test environment and its availability.

Dennis
O'Brien: Good afternoon. My name is Dennis O'Brien. And on behalf of Janet Stevens, our CIO, I'd like to address customer support. You can see some highlights here that are customer support, on the next slide.

We'll be coordinating through the FSIS Service Desk. And you can see the hours and days of the week where support will be available. We have established a telephone system called the automatic call distributor, which will direct your calls to an actual live service desk representative who will ask a series of questions. And that service desk representative will create a ticket to document any issues you may have.

They will either resolve the issue at that level, which is known as Tier 1 or it will be escalated to a technical team. And the ticket queue will also be monitored to ensure that it is properly assigned and it's followed up with the user to make sure that the issues are resolved. We have already been working with the Service Desk personnel to address the flow, which I will get to on the next slide, here.

We have developed screening questions to ask the users to make sure that we properly follow up with you. If you look at the flow slide, which is slide nine, you can see numbers that you need to call if you have an issue. There is an 800 number, and also a 1-929 number for outside the United States. And then once that number is called, I would like to reinforce the sequence.

You would push 1 on the main menu for PHIS issues, and 3 for industry export testing issues. And the service desk technician will ask a series of questions. You

can see some of them here. Though scripts have been developed, they'll also ask questions such as which time zone are you in, what is the best time to call you back, to make sure that you are getting the feedback that you need. If the issues are not resolved, then it will be escalated to the technical control team, Tier 3, for resolution.

The next slide is the test environment, and I'll be followed by Frances Byrd.

Frances
Byrd: Okay, so the industry test environment, I think we have emphasized a couple of times, will require you to have your eAuth Level II access, and you obviously have to be a production user, as well. The environment itself could be up and available, like production is, with the same level of security. We'll keep it up. If there are any notifications or anything, that the system needs to be taken off-line, you will get notification like you do for the production environment for PHIS. It will be available starting on September 20th, I guess, is when the first group starts. And will run through the whole phase I through November, through December. And then it may be extended if necessary, but it will be up and available at that time. You will be able to test through all the functionalities that were previously covered by Anthony. You'll be able to go through the machine-to-machine, you'll be able to do uploads, etc. and then you will be able to test whatever that functionality that has been described during phase 1.

Bill
Smith: Okay, so we'll take any questions now.

Alexandra
Tarrant: Jordan, would you please open up the lines and remind callers how they can ask a question?

Moderator: Absolutely. Ladies and gentlemen, as we move to Q&A, you can press #2 on your telephone keypad to enter the question queue. You will hear a notification when your line is unmuted. At that time, please state your name and question. Once again, pressing #2 will indicate that you wish to ask a question. And we will give it a moment.

And we do have a few questions coming in. Caller, your line is unmuted. Please go ahead.

Caller: We went through this a long time ago, registering – I don't remember how many years ago. When they first were going to do this. And I think all of the people that was involved in it then are gone now. And I have no idea how to get to any of this information. Can we just reregister again?

Anthony
Quartieri: So, based on the letter that was sent earlier, there's guidance for how you can sign up to participate in the industry test environment. I think it is page 4 of the letter, and I don't remember the date, off the top of my head. August 30th is the date of

the letter. And on page 4, it talks about what information you need to provide to FSIS, and then once the test environment is made fully available, they will send you information on how to access it.

And you can register in like a broker account, which – that is all explained in that letter. Prior to that if you want, you can try to get your e-Authentication Level II account. That's described on pages two and three in the letter. And that requires identity verification. And there's a couple of ways that you can do that. And that's described in detail on the letter that was sent on August 30th.

Bill
Smith: This is Bill Smith. I want to add to that. First, to get this letter – I'll make sure the letter is on our website. So, the instructions, if you don't have the letter, you will have it, those pieces. But this just underscores the importance of what we said since we implemented this in 2012.

That is once the industry has the role, then they need to keep the system up. First, the system has to be touched every 90 days, or less, or there will be a lock-out and the process will have to be started all over again. And then, two, if people leave your organization, it is going to be up to the system administrator for the plant to move those people back out of the system because the Agency will not be doing that.

And we have had scenarios where people are going from one place to another, but they haven't been removed from their previous place and we have had to do some special emphasis things in order to get them out of the system. The Agency will not be able to do that on an ongoing basis. And the important part – that any plant can have three system administrators, so you can have backups so that you are not relying on one person.

Alexandra
Tarrant: We did have a question coming in via email. And the question is asking if this testing period is only for the countries that have been listed – those 19 countries that we specified earlier. And that is true. This is a testing for just those 19, if you export to one or more of those 19 countries. Again, those 19 countries are listed in the *Federal Register* notice that was published September 6. They're also in that memo, the August 30 memo that was sent out, and if you need those they are also on the website.

Bill
Smith: This is Bill Smith. So we knew we had approximately 340 some establishments when we did our initial survey. We don't know how many brokers were involved in that. But that's the general population for the first 19 that we are aware of in the Agency. Okay, we'll take another question.

Moderator: All right. We do have five more questions on the line here. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller:	How many companies or users will be allowed into each one of these testing time periods?
Bill Smith:	So is this per plant or are you asking how many per group?
Caller:	Yeah, how many per group, because I think I had heard initially that you had different phases based on dates and you were going to take first come first serve, but I was just curious how many will be allowed into each one of these testing groups.
Bill Smith:	So, we don't have the population right now. Right now, quite honestly, we knew there were registered from 12 to less than 30. So we were expecting a whole lot more users. So we will look at – once after this call – we will determine how many in each group. And then you will be notified through the letter process.
Caller:	Thank you.
Moderator:	All right, and we do have three more callers on the line. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.
Caller:	You already answered my question. It was about the testing for the 19 countries. Canada is not on that list. So that answered my question.
Moderator:	Thank you, caller. We will move on. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.
Caller:	If I'm already registered with LSAS for my Level II authentication, will that be the same username and password for the export application?
Anthony Quartieri:	Yes, it will be.
Bill Smith:	Yes.
Caller:	So all I have to do, is ask plant management to add my name onto PHIS for me to test this enrollment, right?
Bill:	No. This will not be done at the in-plant level, so you would have to – Mr. Quartieri identified a process earlier, so maybe we'll go back again for the broker one because we are not using the in-plant personnel for registration for this process, if you are not in already.
Anthony:	Right. So there's some information that you can submit that is on page 4 of the letter dated August 30th. Email that information to that mailbox and they will

provide you with additional information on how to get to the test environment where the link is, and all that stuff.

And when you go through the registration process, you'll register as an export broker, using your e-Authentication Level II account. As part of that process, the system is going to send you an email to the email address associated with your eAuth Level II account. That will have a unique code in it that is good for, I think, it's up to 24 hours. And then you'll put that code back into the system to validate that, that is you, and you will be able to participate in the testing.

Caller: Thank you.

Moderator: All right, and we do have two more questions on the line. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller: I was curious also about the testing process. Once we send you the email with our information, do we choose which testing group we are in, or will you tell us which testing group, we are in?

Alexandra Tarrant: We would tell you which group you will be in. We'll get back to you via email with a memo that will explain when your testing date will start and which group you will be a part of.

Caller: And what if we are not ready to send a test out that day? Does that move us out? What happens then?

Alexandra Tarrant: If you are not ready, that's where we have built in that time, in December to do testing, if necessary. At that point.

Bill Smith: Within these groups, if we find that there are vacancies and you're not available, let's say, for group 2, but you would be available for group 4, and if there are vacancies, we'll be getting back to you. Or, we do have a catch-up period.

Caller: Perfect. Thank you very much.

Moderator: And we do have one final question on the line. Caller your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller: My question is can the establishment administrator be the same user? Will they have access to use the system? Or will that be considered a fourth user?

Anthony Quartieri: So the establishment administrator is a role that is associated with your account. And your account can have multiple roles. The system has a limit. There's a cap in the number of establishment administrators per establishment. But you can

have as many plant managers or export applicants per establishment as you want. So, I don't know if that answered to your question, but I think I did.

Caller: So I can be the establishment administrator, as well as a user?

Anthony
Quartieri: You can be the establishment administrator, as well as the next four applicants or brokers or plant managers – you can do all of those things. It's a role system, inside the system, you just switch between the roles and that's identified in the draft user guide. And also the test scripts will go over that information on which role you need to be using in which area.

Caller: And do all users have to have the Level II authorization?

Anthony
Quartieri: Yes.

Bill
Smith: This is Bill Smith. I just want to be very clear for anybody on the line, that this is for the test environment. These multiple roles and the corporate roles will not be available in the production environment, that is out there today. So I just want to be very clear that these roles that we are talking about are only available in the test environment.

Caller: Okay, just for testing, okay. Thank you.

Moderator: All right, and we did have another question coming in here. Caller your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller: Yeah, my question was regarding the corporate role in, I guess, the test environment. Is there an account or is there something available for a corporate administrator to be responsible for multiple plant establishments?

Anthony
Quartieri: Yes, there is a corporate administrator role, but that process and the way it works is that there has to be an initial establishment administrator for each of the plants. And that basically grants you access to those plants. And then you add whatever role you need to access those individual plants. That information, again, will be in the user guide. I don't think that's the focus of the first part of the testing, which focuses on the Export Batch and the XML schema, but it is part of the whole export rollout implementation providing corporate access to establishments.

Bill
Smith: So that would be tested in phase 2.

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Caller: Alright, thank you for clarification.

Moderator: And at this time there are no further questions in the queue.

Alexandra
Tarrant: Okay, so if there are no further questions, I just want to make it known that we do
                 have a mailbox available. If you do think of something that you want to ask, send
                 your question to PHISTechnicalQA@fsis.usda.gov, and we do check that mailbox
                 regularly. And we have been responding to questions that have already come in
                 and, as Mr. Smith mentioned earlier, several of those questions have been
                 addressed already and will be posted on the PHIS webpage also. So that is an
                 option if you to think of something that you didn't get a chance to ask on the call
                 today.

Moderator: We did have another question coming over the line, if we have a moment for it?

Bill
Smith: Yes, we'll take as many questions as are asked.

Moderator: All right. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller: One more question, as it relates to the rollout of the balance of the countries. How
                 long before you start in on the next batch of countries, beyond the 19? And do
                 you have any idea which ones you are going to do next?

Bill
Smith: We can certainly share that. And I will ask that we identify them at the next
                 industry constituent meeting. So for the next group, I cannot tell you from an
                 implementation standpoint. We need to get experience with this first 19.
                 Thinking out loud, it will probably be 90 days after we implement in June. That
                 would be our goal. But we really need to get experience with this first 19. I don't
                 know that it would be much longer than 90 days for the next group, because we
                 have to keep this process moving. But that is our thinking right now.

                 So, I will ask the several policy folks in the room, that are with us, and we will
                 ask for the next set of countries. I think that you can expect that you will see the
                 same thing, because we want to gain experience. So in these first 19, we picked
                 three, where we have extra letterhead certificates, or certifications, and then the
                 other 16 just take or accept imports or exports, just off of FSIS inspection legend.

                 So I would think that we would probably want the next group after that the same,
                 where it's not a lot of complications with letterhead and certificates. So I would
                 think that we would have that be part of the criteria for the next rollout. And then
                 once we have two implementations with that experience, and also we know how
                 that is working with the inspectors, what the company is submitting, the letterhead
                 certificates, and all – as part of the export cert and the batching and how that is

working with the inspectors doing the digital signature, and moving it on to the PHV – once we have more experience with that, then we'll start moving on to countries where there is more letterheads and certifications required. So that would be our thinking, right now.

Caller: Would industry have any input into what the next countries that industry would request to be targeted?

Bill
Smith: So always and again, I would encourage that at the industry constituent monthly meeting, to bring that up. One of the criteria that the Agency will be looking at is letterheads and alternatives, and additional forms. That is a harder thing to manage. So we are going to want to get experience. That's why we picked the first 19 the way we did, and probably the second batch.

So we will not be looking to go to a country where multiple letterheads or certificates are required, in addition to the original cert. But again, any suggestions you have, we would be glad to hear at the industry constituent meeting. In fact, there is a piece where I talk about PHIS at each one of those meetings. And certainly when they open it up for questions, certainly that would be a time to bring that up.

Moderator: And we did have another question come in. But in the meantime, I would just like to remind our participants, if you do have a question, please press #2. And caller your line is unmuted, please go ahead.

Caller: I was just going to ask, there's been some discussion about getting e-Authorization sign-off from the countries using the system without paper, going paperless, from the countries themselves. Have we pursued this at all and are there any countries that are ready to also be involved, that would be using the system without sending the paperwork, the printed papers?

Bill
Smith: So we have three countries right now that we have some kind of e-cert process with. I believe it's the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Australia. And we have had other countries express interest. And that's something that we are looking at, but right now that will have to be worked for next year's work, because that's not part of this test or this module that we have now.

But, yes, the Agency is looking at that and strongly encouraging that. The reason we're looking at that and strongly encouraging that is because the more we can get into that kind of exchange, the less – I think that will reduce the burden for letterhead certificates and certifications.

Moderator: And with that, there are no further questions in the queue. But I would just remind you all that, if you do have a question, please press #2 on your telephone keypad.

	And we do have another question come in. Caller, your line is unmuted, please go ahead.
Caller:	Yes, we export high volumes of meat products and beef products north, to Canada. Do you see this process including that type of export?
Bill Smith:	Yes. This process eventually will get all 234+ countries into PHIS, and Canada will be one of them. Right now, they are not in the first two groupings of 19 countries, or the next batch.
Moderator:	And with that, there are no further questions in the queue.
Alexandra Tarrant:	Okay, thank you all for calling in today. If there are no further questions, we will go ahead and conclude the call. Again, as a reminder, we do have that mailbox available to you, should you have additional questions in the future. Thank you.
Moderator:	Thank you for joining today's teleconference. The call has now concluded, and you may disconnect.

[End of Recording, 36:24]