

## **English Woodland Grant Scheme**

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Operations Note 019

28<sup>th</sup> September 2011

# Customer and Land Registration

**Purpose** To explain the requirements for customer and land registration if you are planning to make a new application into EWGS, or wish to make a claim under an existing EWGS contract, including claims for farm woodland payments.

**Background** European Union regulations that came into force in 2007 have introduced new requirements for applications and payments made under the Rural Development Plan for England (RDPE).

All land entering into any of the RDPE land management schemes must now be registered on the Rural Land Register (RLR) prior to entering that scheme. Previously land registration has only been a requirement for agricultural land under the IACS system. Registration of land is required to enable 'cross checks' to be made to ensure that no parcel of land is receiving incompatible EU funding under either the Single Payment Scheme or any of the RDPE schemes. In England it is the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) that maintain the RLR. All land on the RLR must be linked to an occupier (owner or tenant) via a unique beneficiary number.

There is also a requirement for each of the 'beneficiaries' of rural development schemes to have a unique reference number. In England the RPA maintain the customer register and the unique reference number is known as the Single Business Identifier (SBI). As well as identifying the owners/occupiers of land the identification of unique beneficiaries is needed to aid the co-ordination of inspections, implementation of cross compliance rules and declaration of total EU funding received by each beneficiary.

Existing and new applicants, who do not already have SBI, must register themselves as a customer with the RPA. Additionally any land that they wish to enter into a land management scheme must be registered on the RLR.

**How SBI & RLR Information is used** Any personal information collected as part of the SBI and RLR registration process is only distributed and used within Defra organisations, notably for:

- RPA, Natural England and Forestry Commission payments
- Checking no double funding is possible
- Coordinating inspections (including Animal Health)
- Reporting to the EU on payments and compliance

Appendix 1 provides further information on Defra DPA commitments.

**Land Registration for existing EWGS agreements** Older EWGS schemes should now have been captured on the RLR as part of the retrospective registration process that took place in 2007.

**New Applications** From **1 April 2008** all applicants and the land being entered into EWGS should be registered prior to application. We will accept applications when the annual Prospectus opens but we will not be able to process any of these applications until registration with the RPA is complete.

**Claims** From **1 June 2008** existing EWGS agreement holders are also required to give their SBI when submitting claims for any outstanding grant payments. This requirement also applies to agreement holders wishing to claim their annual payments for the legacy farm woodland schemes (either Farm Woodland Scheme – FWS, or Farm Woodland Premium Scheme – FWPS)

Please note that as from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 it will no longer be necessary for agreement holders to provide an SBI number when claiming under WGS.

**Annual Declaration** To activate entitlements under the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) you need to declare information about your land use to the RPA. The declaration must include information on the following types of woodland:

- New or young woodland under EWGS or FWPS used to claim SPS entitlements.
- All other Woodland under an FC grant scheme.
- Other woodland used to support SPS entitlements e.g. grazed woodland.

This information is declared on RPA's SP5 form which must be submitted by 15<sup>th</sup> May each year at the latest. When completing the form, you should use the following codes for woodland:

- **FR3** for land under an FC agreement, not being claimed under SPS
- **SA2** for land under an FC or National Forest agreement but also claimed under SPS. To be eligible for this code the land must match one of the following:
  - The land was used to meet your set-aside entitlements in 2008 and is under EWGS or FWPS. If you claim SPS on this basis we will only pay your farm woodland payment if you have chosen a farm woodland payment rate which accounts for the fact you can also receive an SPS payment. We will have written to you to explain this and offer you a farm woodland payment rate that accounts for SPS payments.
  - The land was used to activate ordinary SPS entitlements in 2008 and you are entering into EWGS in or after 2009.
  - The land is eligible land under a National Forestry scheme – land in the National Forestry scheme becomes eligible for SPS for the first time in 2009. Contact the RPA Customer Support Centre (0845 603 7777) for further details.
- **The relevant code** for woodland used to activate other SPS entitlements, e.g., for grazed woodland use code PP1. Please refer to the SPS Guidance Handbook.

Following clarification from the EU, woodland that would have been declared as FR1, no longer needs to be declared on the RPA's SP5; this includes all woodland that is not in an RDPE agreement and is not used to claim SPS under PP1 as grazed woodland.

For further information on Single Payment Scheme, go to the [RPA's SPS website](#) or RPA's Customer Service Centre 0845 603 7777

## How to Register

First, you will need to register yourself or your business with the RPA in order to obtain an SBI. You can then register your land. If you do not have an SBI you will not be able to register your land.

### Customer Registration

You can register in two ways:

- Over the phone by calling RPA on 0845 603 7777 and following the instructions.
- Completing a paper registration form called a CREG 01. To obtain a CReg 01:
  - Phone the RPA on 0845 603 7777.
  - Visit the RPA website at, <http://rpa.defra.gov.uk/rpa/index.nsf/home> and using the Customer Registration link at the right hand side of the screen. By then selecting [forms and guidance](#) you will be taken to a page where you can download a copy of the CReg01 form and the accompanying guidance.
  - E-mail RPA's customer service centre: [csc@rpa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:csc@rpa.gsi.gov.uk).
  - Write to: Rural Payments Agency, PO Box 1058, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE99 4YQ.

Under 'business activity' in section 4A you should enter code **F38**. This represents all RDPE schemes, including those administered by the FC. Sections not relevant to your business should be crossed through. For customer registration, the original forms should be sent back to the RPA's Newcastle office and they will notify you of your SBI. They will also issue you with a County Parish Holding number (CPH) which must be used in all future correspondence. It will assist the RPA if you include a cover note indicating that you are registering with the intention of applying for EWGS.

If you have not previously had an SBI but some or all of your land is already registered (e.g. as a result of the transitional arrangements detailed above) you will need to link this land to your new SBI by completing an RLE1 form. This is as described under 'Land Registration' below.

If you are already registered as a customer in Scotland or Wales you will still need an SBI registration for applications made in England because different customer registers operate in each country.

If you are an agent acting for a client it is important that the customer registration details relate to the land owner/occupier. Each of your clients will need their own unique SBI.

**Managing your payee information** If you are registering with RPA for the sole purpose of applying for a Forestry Commission grant you do not need to provide RPA with your bank details. RPA will check this with you if you register over the phone. The Forestry Commission will collect your payment details later when processing your application for the grant itself.

If RPA already hold your bank details but you want to change the bank details for **only your Forestry Commission payments** there is no need to notify the RPA - you only need to tell us. You will need to confirm the change in writing but once we have this we will change your payment information and direct your future Forestry Commission payments to your new account. We will not pass these changes on to the RPA. To change your bank details for payments under other schemes such as Single Payment Scheme or Environmental Stewardship you will still need to notify RPA.

**Land Registration** All the land you wish to put under a RDPE land management scheme must be registered on the RLR before you make your application.

For land registration you will need to complete an RLE1 form. These can be obtained through the same means as customer registration, or alternatively use the following link and go to the web page for registering land.

<http://www.rpa.gov.uk/rpa/index.nsf/UIMenu/57EB5CADAD0BFAD580256F72003D47AE?Opendocument>

Farmland will generally already be registered on the RLR, as will some woods on farms. However this may not be the case if you have not previously sought funding through any of the agri-environment schemes, or if you only own woodland.

If you are unsure whether your land is registered you may request a map from the Forestry Commission that identifies the parcels and their numbers registered on the RLR. You may use this map to accompany your RLE1 form. To obtain a map from us use the Map Request form available on our website and send it to one of our Regional Offices

For clarity our 1:10000 scale maps show only the boundaries of RLR parcels while our 1:5000 and 1:2500 maps also show the final 4 digits of the RLR parcel number.

Please note that update processes between the RPA and FC mean it can take two weeks for registered parcels to appear on FC maps.

**Turnaround times and updates** As of February 2008 registration for SBIs and land on the RLR is being completed within 28 days. You are encouraged to apply sooner rather than later to ensure registration and subsequent grant applications are processed without any unnecessary delays.

The customer and land registers must be kept up to date at all times. You must notify RPA of any changes in circumstances.

**Further guidance** Any queries relating to customer or land registration should be referred to the RPA's Customer Service Centre 0845 603 7777.

For further information on Single Payment Scheme, go to the [RPA's SPS](#)

[website](#) or RPA's Customer Service Centre

The EWGS website [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) contains all the information needed to apply for FC grant support. If you do not have access to the internet, you can request any of the information from your local Forestry Commission office.

We recommend getting professional advice on woodland management and grants. A list of national and regional professional organisations is available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice) or from your local FC office.

### **Versions**

Version 2.2 issued September 2011 – removed need for SBI for WGS and legacy farm woodland claims

Version 2.1 issued September 2010 – added new information on payee management.

Version 2.0 issued April 2009 – inclusion of guidance on SP5 declarations.

Version 1.3 issued Feb 09 – inclusion of Defra data protection information.

Version 1.2 issued 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – minor changes to customer registration section.

Version 1.1 issued 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008 – minor changes.

Version 1.0 issued March 2008.

## Appendix 1 – Defra Data Protection Act Statement

Defra is the data controller in respect of any personal data that you provide to RPA. Your personal data will be protected in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We will use the data:

- to support the application to which it relates;
- in the case of the Cattle Tracing System (CTS) to register cattle and their movements and to confirm the existence of a full animal history;
- for the administration of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and other schemes administered by RPA and to keep you informed of developments within schemes;
- in relation to the production and safety of food;
- in relation to the management of land and other environmental controls;
- in relation to animal health and welfare; and
- in relation to occupational health and welfare.

When it is necessary to do so, we may pass data to other organisations. For example:

- to HM Revenue & Customs for import or export purposes;
- to local authorities for milk, health or cross-compliance purposes; or
- to the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission for the administration of the CAP

We may also use the data we collect to produce statistics for the agricultural census. However, these statistics will not identify individuals.

RPA may be required to release information (including personal data and commercial information) under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We are committed to continuing our existing policy of releasing information on subsidies paid to individuals and businesses under CAP schemes.

You should also note that the European regulations on the financing of the CAP have changed. We are required to publish the name, town, first part of the postcode and amounts of direct payments paid to all CAP beneficiaries. This information is required to be published for payments made from January 2007 for European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and October 2007 for European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) schemes.

Defra or its agents, including RPA, may use your name, address and other details to contact you in connection with occasional customer research aimed at improving the services that we provide to you.

To obtain a copy of your personal data as held by RPA, go to [www.rpa.gov.uk](http://www.rpa.gov.uk) and click on 'Access to information', then 'Personal data'. RPA's public service guarantee on data handling, which sets out your rights in respect of the handling of your personal data, is also available online, or call the RPA CSC.

If you believe that any of the information we hold concerning you is incorrect or out of date, please provide us with the accurate information in writing together with supporting evidence (if appropriate). Send the information to:

Access to Information Helpdesk  
Rural Payments Agency  
PO Box 69  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 3YD.