

FIAS Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FERTILISER INDUSTRY ASSURANCE SCHEME



Welcome

Welcome to the latest FIAS Update. Since our last edition, the UK has left the EU and we have faced the hardships and pressure of yet another lockdown. The new FIAS standard has also been accredited by UKAS and came into force on 1st April.

This issue focuses on that new standard with a detailed look at some of the changes, along with an update on the FIAS Tender and remote auditing.

Thank you for your continued support. Please contact me with your comments, questions or suggestions for future issues.



Roberta Reeve
Technical Manager
for AIC Services

The New FIAS Standard - implemented April 2021

The new version of the FIAS Standard came into effect on 1st April 2021. All FIAS audits are now carried out against this version.

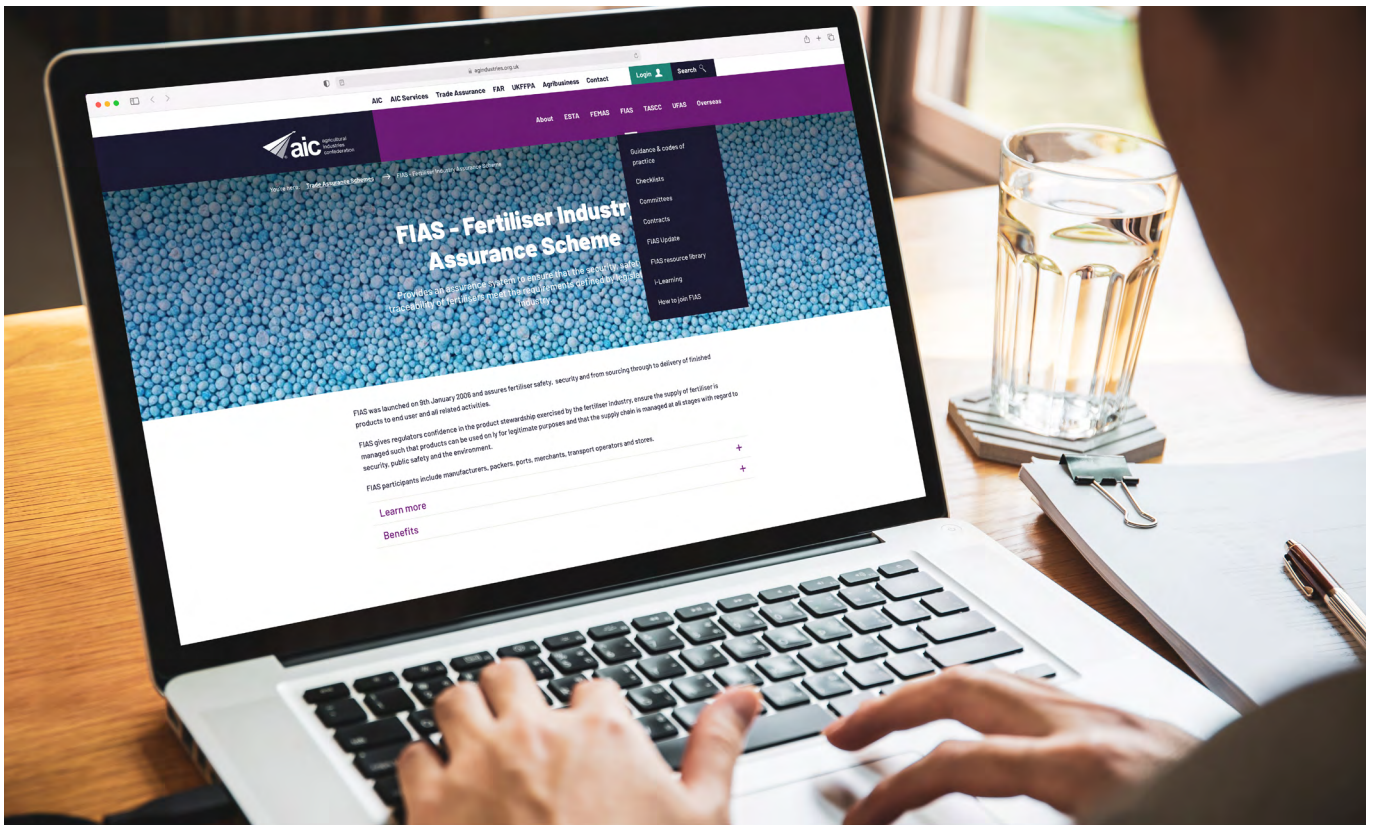
Kiwa auditors have undergone training in the new standard. AIC Services have been fielding queries and planning webinars to support participants in understanding what the changes may mean for their businesses. Some of these changes are explored further in this issue.

The aims behind this revision of the FIAS standard include:

- Re-emphasis of the principles of FIAS: legislative compliance, security, traceability, product safety and good practice
- Recognition that, although each individual business in the supply chain has a specific role and responsibility, none work in isolation. Industry collaboration is what supports the FIAS principles and provides confidence, for both the authorities and the public, that fertilisers are handled safely
- Clarification of product ownership responsibilities
- Simplification of wording and clause content
- Provision of templates for some key business processes
- Update of references and links

If you have not yet read the new standard, be sure to view it on the AIC website. If you require a printed copy, then contact enquiries@agindustries.org.uk





FIAS 2021 in detail

A list of all the key changes in FIAS 2021 is available on the AIC website. This relates the new numbering system to the clause numbers in the previous standard.

In this issue we are going to focus on 5 areas:

1. Format and participant support

FIAS 2021 has been produced as a single document with colour-coded sections. The Scheme Rules within this document contain important information about how the scheme works, auditing, non-conformances, time scales and procedures. The General Requirements section applies to all participants and is followed by the sections relevant to specific business activities. At the end are appendices containing definitions, legislation lists and contact details.

AIC encourages use of the PDF available on the AIC website, which can be used to access links and other information instantly. A printed version is available on request.

The FIAS webpages have been revised to provide supporting material and information.

As a guide, here are the sections listed and the information included in each:

Visit the FIAS home page www.agindustries.org.uk/sectors/trade-assurance-schemes/fias-fertiliser-industry-assurance-scheme.html to find a summary of everything you need to know about FIAS. Scroll down to find the Trade Assurance Checker, the Kiwa portal for i-learning, links to fertiliser legislation and recent briefings.

You can also select FIAS in the purple banner and select a section from the drop down menu:

- **Guidance and Codes of Practice** – general information linked to FIAS
- **Checklists** – here you will find the Template documents for Business Process Risk Assessment, policy statement, management review, audit checklist and traceability. It is not compulsory to use these documents but you may find them helpful in meeting FIAS requirements.
- **Committees** – the governing structure of FIAS
- **Contracts** – Links to AIC template contracts
- **FIAS Update** – current and previous issues of FIAS newsletters
- **Resource library** – a general store of all FIAS linked documents and publications
- **i-learning** – information and link to Kiwa i-learning portal



2. Scope & Responsibilities

FIAS 2021 retains the risk assessment approach as the basis of the scheme. The new standard describes this as a **business process risk assessment (Clause G1.1)**.

This differentiates the assessment from one targeted at health and safety. A FIAS business process risk assessment needs to include consideration of all of the FIAS principles – legal compliance, security, traceability, product safety and good practice. The business process risk assessment is the foundation for all the FIAS procedures and controls.

In the same clause, FIAS 2021 also clarifies that the scheme “covers the entire supply chain of fertiliser from sourcing through to delivery of finished products to final user and all related activities.”

Clause G1.3 defines participant responsibility and makes clear that “the owner of the goods at each and every stage of the supply chain, is the responsible party for ensuring compliance with the FIAS Standard”.

Later in the Storage and Transport sections, it is made clear who is responsible for provision of signatures and printed names on receipt, despatch and delivery of fertiliser raw materials or products (**S6.4, S7.3, T9.3**). Non-conformances are often raised in this area where traceability documents have no signature or an illegible signature. NaCTSO have emphasised the importance of a printed name. In times like these when we may wish to avoid the use of pen and paper, the traceability principle still applies. Alternative methods are used to maintain compliance. If unsure, contact Kiwa for advice.

Following the Beirut port explosion, it was agreed to make it clearer that quayside activities are included within the standard. In clause **G24.2** regarding fertiliser imports, guidance describes the responsibility of an importer regarding the receipt, unloading at port, storage and transport of fertiliser materials.

In the storage section, quayside storage has been added to the definition of storage in **S1.1** and included in NAMOS notification requirements in **S4.1**.

3. Training

FIAS 2021 specifies that a designated person within a business must complete basic training for FIAS. This can take the form of the AIC i-learning modules or an equivalent internal or external training package.

FIAS i-learning is available for Transport Manager, Driver, Storage and Merchant courses. For those who have already completed a course, top up modules are available which cover changes and new areas in FIAS 2021.

Access is via the Kiwa participant portal. New users should email uk.fias@kiwa.com or call 01423 878873 for log-in details.

4. Contracted services – derogation for use of non-FIAS certified contractors and merchants.

Clauses G14 – G17 in FIAS 2021 relate to clause **2.4.2.3** in the previous version. The process of achieving approval for use of a non-FIAS-certified service provider by



derogation has been updated in order to make the procedure clearer and emphasise that the contracting company assumes responsibility for the FIAS compliance of the service provider. The non-FIAS company must meet FIAS requirements.

The approval procedure requires the contracting company to carry out an initial audit of the potential service supplier to FIAS standards and submit this report to Kiwa before use. Stores must be inspected as part of the audit. Approval of the derogation will be confirmed in writing.

To continue use of an approved non-FIAS contractor or merchant in subsequent years, the contracting business is required to complete an audit (and inspection of stores) on an annual basis and review the contractor performance as part of their management review. The audit reports will be reviewed as part of the company’s own annual FIAS audit.

Kiwa maintain a list of businesses who have approved service providers under the derogation. It is the business’s responsibility to inform Kiwa of any changes. Certification status can be checked using the Trade Assurance Checker for FIAS businesses and approval status for non-FIAS contractors by contacting Kiwa.

Sub-contracting by a service provider who is approved under the derogation is not permitted under FIAS.

5. Product recall

Section 9 in FIAS 2016 has moved to the **General Requirements** section of FIAS 2021. Questions have been raised in the past about who is responsible for a product recall. **Clause G21** in FIAS 2021 clarifies this – the responsibility for initiating a product recall lies with the product supplier, most likely to be a manufacturer or merchant. However, stores and transport operators have a role to play in maintaining good records, which can be easily retrieved to support the required information if a product recall is necessary.

Traceability is a key principle of FIAS. Testing recall procedures is important to ensure that they work correctly in a genuine situation.

If you have any queries about FIAS 2021 and how it should be applied, contact Jaclyn Redman, FIAS Scheme manager at Kiwa Agri Food: Jaclyn.redman@kiwa.com 01423 878873 or Roberta Reeve at AIC Services roberta.reeve@agindustries.org.uk 01733 385244.

Remote auditing

Due to coronavirus restrictions, remote auditing has become a way of life for participants and auditors. However, we are now starting to emerge from lockdown and on-site visits will begin again following government guidance.

The technology used in remote auditing has been widely supported by participants and benefitted the audit process. The ease of uploading documents via the portal, reduced interruption to working days and increased focus on key points during the audit have all received positive feedback. While remote auditing is not suitable for every case and cannot replace the in-person benefits of a physical audit, a combined approach may be possible based on assessment of risk and ensuring that standards are maintained.

As we return to normal life, AIC Services and Kiwa Agri Food are discussing ways to incorporate technology use and other learnings from remote auditing into our processes for the future.



FIAS Tender

AIC Services held a tender process for the contract of FIAS certification from 2022-2026. This was a thorough process with three certification bodies being interviewed by a panel, including members of the FIAS Steering Group, the Fertiliser Executive Committee and AIC Services Board.

After careful deliberation over the stiff competition, the contract was awarded, with the approval of the FIAS Steering Group, to Kiwa Agri Food to continue as the Certification Body for FIAS. The reasons for this decision included the wide and practical knowledge that Kiwa Agri Food have in the fertiliser sector, the positive way they have completed previous and current contracts, and the innovative approach they have shown in developing IT applications and remote auditing during the pandemic.

For scheme participants, this means continuity in the scheme and continuing with familiar contacts. We congratulate Kiwa Agri Food and look forward to furthering our work together in developing and supporting FIAS.

EU Exit and Trade

Many updates and changes to legislation have occurred or are underway in the next few years following the UK exit from the EU. These include REACH, Explosive Precursors, and UK Fertiliser Regulations. The situation is further complicated as EU legislation still applies in Northern Ireland under the NI Protocol.

The AIC Fertiliser Sector is working in several areas: with Defra on proposed new UK Fertiliser Regulations; seeking to avoid significant regulatory divergence between UK and EU to prevent increased operating costs to UK industry; consultation on reducing ammonia emissions from solid urea.

AIC will continue to monitor and update FIAS participants of any changes that impact on FIAS.



Other news in brief

- **Look out for webinars** on the new FIAS and TASC standards coming soon from AIC Services. These will be held in June with recordings made available on the AIC website for those unable to attend. Contact roberta.reeve@agindustries.org.uk for further details.
- **The AIC Fertiliser Sector** has developed a checklist as an aid to the assessment of the safety of stored ammonium nitrate fertilisers: www.agindustries.org.uk/resource/an-fertiliser-safety-checklist.html

It is designed to be used with reference to the AIC Guide to the Storage, Handling and Transportation of Ammonium Nitrate-based Fertilisers: www.agindustries.org.uk/resource/fertiliser-health-and-safety.html

- **Beirut explosion**
Participants may be interested to view a reconstruction video of the Beirut explosion. This uses public source information to recreate the circumstances of the explosion. Watch here: [The Beirut Port Explosion ← Forensic Architecture \(forensic-architecture.org\)](https://www.forensic-architecture.org/)
- **FIAS Driver CPC training**
Following the success of the TASC Driver CPC course, Kiwa have begun work on a FIAS course. Details coming soon.
- **ACT Action Counters Terrorism Training**
ACT is a very useful training package that can be completed by everyone in a business or by individuals. Find out more here: <https://www.highfieldlearning.com/act>



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