

# FIAS update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FERTILISER INDUSTRY ASSURANCE SCHEME



## Welcome

Welcome to the winter 2023 edition of FIAS Update.

It has been a busy time for FIAS merchant and distributor Participants with the new Control of Explosives Precursors and Poisons Regulations 2023 coming into force on 1 October 2023 adding additional measures to the Poisons Act 1972. We look at progress and some of the issues that have arisen.

A new online report has been issued about the creation of FIAS in 2006, its implementation, achievements, support for Participants, and future development.

We also review the most common non-conformances found at audit, what can be put in place to mitigate these, and some of the new options available to help FIAS Participants with audit preparation.

If you have any questions or issues you would like to discuss, please get in touch.



Roberta Reeve  
Technical Manager,  
AIC Services

## How FIAS secures the UK's fertiliser supply chain

As part of AIC's 20th anniversary celebrations, a special interactive report has been written about FIAS. It offers a comprehensive look at the value and security brought by the pioneering trade assurance scheme since it launched in 2006.

The development of the scheme is recognised as a significant achievement of industry and government working together to develop a practical scheme for assurance of traceability, safety, and security of the fertiliser supply chain.

It can be easy to forget the reasons why such schemes are developed, and the report also seeks to capture and provide the history of the scheme as well as demonstrating that it continues to achieve its aims with the support of stakeholders and fertiliser businesses.

The effects of global events such as Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine have been felt throughout the industry and by its customers. FIAS operation is regularly reviewed by the Steering and Working Groups to ensure that it meets its objectives and remains fit for purpose.

Each part of the fertiliser supply chain has a role to play from raw material selection, to delivery, manufacturing, storage, sales, and transport to the final user.

Please [view the report](#) to see comments from our Stakeholders and Participants on the value of FIAS. You will also be able to see a new animation on the timeline of FIAS development and challenges coming our way in the future.

Thank you to all FIAS Participants and Stakeholders for your continued support.



SCAN ME

# Control of Explosives Precursors and Poisons Regulations 2023

These updated Regulations came into force 1 October 2023. The summer edition of the FIAS newsletter featured details of the changes affecting FIAS Participants who supply controlled products to professional end users such as farmers.

AIC's website offers regularly updated guidance, including clarification from the Home Office. You will also find answers to frequently asked questions and a downloadable flyer which can be used to explain to farming customers the new requirements for purchasing ammonium nitrate fertilisers and other controlled materials, such as photo ID.

FIAS auditors have had training in the new Regulations. Compliance with all relevant legislation is a basic principle of FIAS.



Audits after 1 October include the new Regulations. This also applies to initial and continuing approval of non-FIAS merchants (e.g. merchants within FIAS auditing non-FIAS merchants as specified in the Standard) must audit compliance with the changes in the Regulations.

The Regulations are not prescriptive on how to comply. Guidance is available on the [Protect UK website](#) and can be applied as works best for your business whether a large distributor with IT supported computer systems, a retail store, or a single-person merchant operation.



## Key points for FIAS merchants and suppliers:

- Understand the difference between regulated and reportable substances (e.g. fertilisers containing 16% or more nitrogen from ammonium nitrate are regulated; below this level they are reportable).
- Customer verification – for regulated substances, recent photographic ID and a statement of nature of business is required and a record kept.
- Supply chain notification – those selling regulated and reportable substances must inform their business to business or end user customers of that status and their obligations under the Regulations.
- Training – staff involved in the sales of precursors are trained in which products are regulated or reportable, requesting relevant information and ID from customers, recognising suspicious behaviour, and reporting suspicious transactions. Training materials are available via the [Protect UK website](#) and a FIAS training checklist and record template (page 3).
- Suspicious transaction reporting – must be completed within 24 hours of becoming suspicious, preferably via [the online portal](#). If this is not possible, then via the national contact point on 0800 789321.



## Earned Recognition Update

Earned Recognition is an agreement between the Department for Transport (DfT) and AIC Services (AICS) for FIAS Participants involved in the Carriage of Dangerous Goods (CDG) and ADR. FIAS certification demonstrates compliance with those regulations and means those certified hauliers have a lower risk rating – a key benefit.

Earned Recognition is maintained with regular contact between DfT and AICS. Scheme data is submitted on a monthly and quarterly basis with an annual review to ensure the operation of FIAS meets the requirements of the agreement.

The DfT inspection team will continue to shadow Kiwa audits of FIAS Participants over the coming year – this gives DfT added confidence that auditing standards are at the right level and helps FIAS in understanding key issues for DfT.



Department  
for Transport

## Participant support

Kiwa has produced videos to assist Participants with understanding what to expect at an audit and how to log into the assurance portal to upload audit related documents.

Log in to AIC's website to find these videos on the trade assurance page or by following the links below:

AIC Portal Guide: <https://vimeo.com/856809821>

What to expect at your audit: <https://vimeo.com/856773713>

A new training template and checklist is available on the FIAS website:

<https://www.agindustries.org.uk/sectors/trade-assurance-schemes/fias-fertiliser-industry-assurance-scheme/checklists.html>

- FIAS 2021 training record template – customisable for your business and covers the basic requirements. Lack of training records is often picked up at audit as a non-conformance.
- Training checklist: Control of Explosives Precursors and Poisons Regulations 2023 – an aid to highlight any training gaps to meet the new Regulations.



## New FIAS Standard now available online

In addition to the printed and PDF formats of the FIAS 2021 Standard, the document is now available as a digital version.

This version features live links to appendices and external references and websites, making it easier to use. Scan the QR code to view the Standard.



## FIAS non-compliance review

One way that AIC and the FIAS Committees assess the scheme's effectiveness is to look at the type and number of non-conformances raised at audits.

The data below is from April to the end of September 2023. The most repeated non-conformances across all sectors of the scheme are listed below, with details of why the requirement is there and how to meet it.

Clause	Clause	Reason required and help to comply
G6.1	The Company shall ensure that all personnel are trained. Records of training and competence shall be kept.	<p>Train all staff working on FIAS-related tasks so they can complete their jobs as required.</p> <p>Records are required as evidence at audit – otherwise, there is no proof that training was completed. Keep certificates of attendance or completion of courses for you and your staff. Details of course content are useful.</p> <p>A training record template is provided on the FIAS website (see page 3)</p>
G6.2	As a minimum, a designated person must complete the relevant AIC i-learning modules or equivalent training package.	The i- Learning modules provide an easy way to introduce FIAS principles. Access via the portal and contact Kiwa for logins.
G18.1	The Company shall plan and conduct internal audits.	There is an AIC FIAS internal <a href="#">audit checklist</a> that can be downloaded to help ensure all areas are covered. Internal audits tell you your systems are working – why wait until your FIAS audit?
G3.1	Senior management shall carry out an annual review.	<p>It is important that the senior management or owner/operator of a FIAS approved business reviews the FIAS scheme formally once a year.</p> <p>This shows how well you are complying with the standard and is an opportunity to find any gaps that need attention. Keep a record of your meeting and the outcomes to use as evidence at your audit. A template is provided on the FIAS website.</p>
G15.1	The Company shall ensure that businesses contracted to provide storage, transport, or merchandising of fertiliser product supplied by the Company are FIAS certified.	If FIAS certified contractors are not available for storage, transport, or merchandising, then non-FIAS contractors may be used following approval by Kiwa. The process and requirements are detailed in clause G16.
S7.3	The Company must obtain a signature and printed name of the driver to confirm the load details.	Traceability is a key part of FIAS. It is always important to know who fertiliser product is being handed to. Records here could help identify persons involved in theft or potential misuse.
T9.3	Upon receipt, the receiving Company shall provide the delivery driver with the signature and full printed name of the representative receiving the product.	It can be difficult to get a printed name and signature – FIAS allows alternative means to be used on deliveries where no receiver is available if there is prior agreement between supplier and customer. If no agreement exists, then the driver must not unload, but contact the traffic office or site collected from for further instructions. Record all actions.