



SCAN THE CODE  
TO FIND OUT MORE →

READ THE FULL REPORT



# AIC at 20: How FIAS secures the UK's fertiliser supply chain



## Executive summary

The Fertiliser Industry Assurance Scheme (FIAS) was launched in January 2006 in response to Defra's request for the UK fertiliser industry to introduce an assurance scheme to manage fertiliser security, safety and traceability following safety and terrorism incidents.

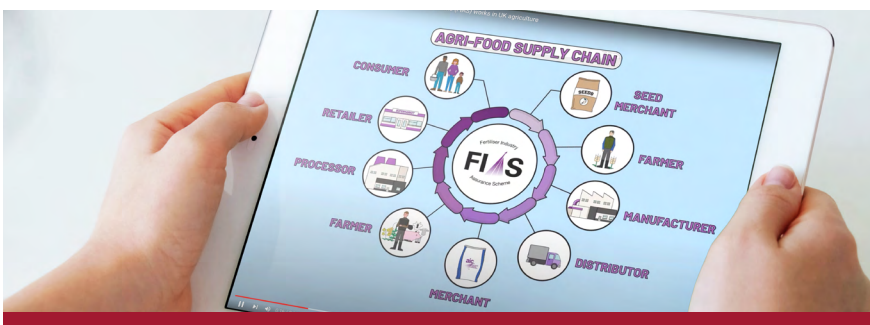
FIAS was developed by a steering group made up of industry and non-industry stakeholders, a working group of industry technical specialists, and the process coordinated by AIC.

These groups continue to manage the strategic direction and the practical operation of the Scheme. This includes regular reviews of the FIAS Standard.

The Scheme continues to be relevant today as demonstrated by the Beirut explosion in 2020 where FIAS provided UK authorities and the public with confidence in robust procedures preventing such an occurrence here.

The scope of FIAS covers the whole supply chain of fertiliser, from sourcing of raw materials to delivery to the end user. FIAS is applied by a certification process managed by a UKAS accredited Certification Body appointed via a tender process. Participant compliance to the Standard is audited annually by trained auditors.

Looking ahead, there are challenges to be met in the changing fertiliser market, regulatory review and sustainability while ensuring security, traceability and product safety are maintained alongside support and value for Participants.



SCAN THE CODE  
TO FIND OUT MORE ↓

WATCH THE FIAS VIDEO



# Background

## Why was FIAS developed?

Fertilisers have been used for many years in the development of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the use of which by individuals and terrorist organisations has resulted in loss of life and significant disruption to commercial and business operations.

*“The FIAS Scheme provides independent audited reassurance that compliance with the Standards is being followed by the respective Members throughout the UK fertiliser industry. The Scheme has ensured that the availability of fertilisers as a potential pre-cursor element for terrorist groups is significantly reduced. Since the launch of the scheme some 20 years ago there has been no large-scale terrorist incident which has used fertilisers as a main component. It has been successful in achieving its aims by making the UK a safer place in which to live and work.”*



**NATIONAL  
COUNTER TERRORISM  
SECURITY OFFICE**

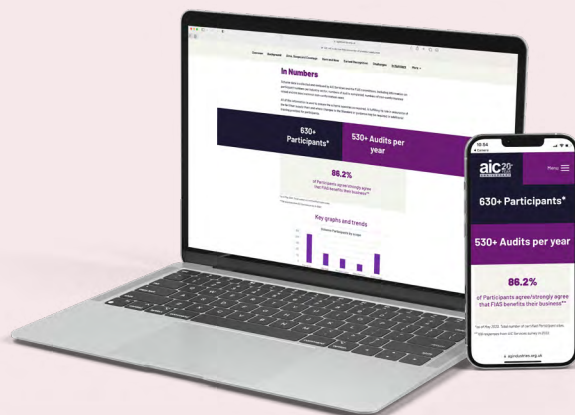
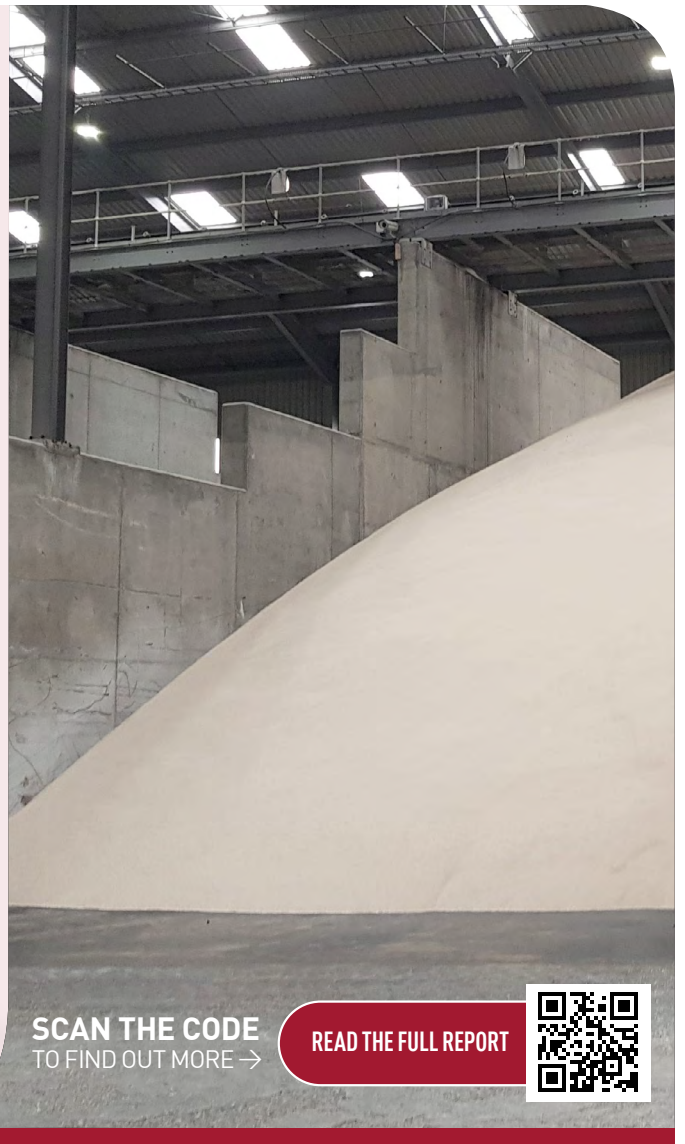
# Relevance

**The terrorist threat has evolved, with increased use of vehicles as weapons, variable motivations and incidents more likely to be by an individual. However there are still incidents of suspicious activity and attempts to purchase materials with plans to misuse.**

FIAS has made it difficult for those who want to cause harm or damage to acquire fertiliser materials - it is important to maintain awareness and the principles around how the fertiliser industry stewards its products. This does not mean the threat has gone away - unfortunately, there are still those who wish to disrupt or cause harm.

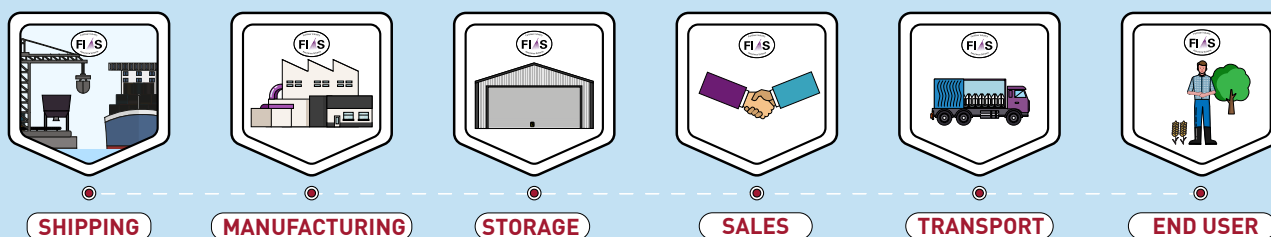
Not all fertilisers are prone to misuse, but FIAS also provides the industry with traceability and best practice for safe handling and storage.

These help prevent incidents which risk endangering lives and cause environmental pollution.



## The FIAS assured fertiliser supply chain

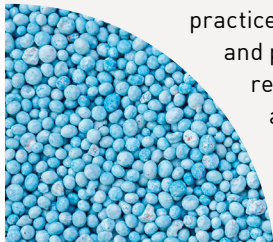
The Scheme covers the entire supply chain of fertiliser, from sourcing through to delivery of finished products to final users, and all related activities.



### Coverage

The scope of FIAS is deliberately set to cover all fertilisers. It doesn't just apply to nitrogen-based fertilisers and ammonium nitrate, although these may have the greatest potential for causing damage if misused or mishandled. It applies to all fertilisers for commercial use in all formats, including solid and liquid products, throughout the supply chain.

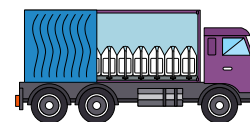
Materials which can seem innocuous may have the potential for misuse if, for example, quantities are accumulated. A key element of the FIAS Standard is the business process risk assessment. Legislation and other codes of practice can also apply to fertiliser materials and products. FIAS builds upon this to require specific consideration for safe and secure storage and transport, knowledge of customer, and full traceability.



*"FIAS has been widely accepted and has become an integral part of the fertiliser supply chain. It is regularly updated in line with regulation and legislation changes. Defra fully endorses FIAS and continues to support the Scheme and its future development, alongside the links it provides with the fertiliser industry, other Government Departments, and relevant agencies. The supply chain from manufacturing, importing, blending, merchants and transport of fertiliser products to the end users across the country ensures the safety, security, and traceability of fertilisers."*



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



### Future

FIAS has changed and grown over the years to meet the needs of the industry, its Participants and its stakeholders.

With ongoing support and co-operation, FIAS is looking to the future for continuing improvement and providing authorities and the public with reassurance and confidence in well-managed and secure supply chains.



*"FIAS is needed to ensure that fertiliser supply chains remain safe, secure and traceable in the future. Threats include the poor storage or transportation of fertilisers as well as the use of fertilisers in improvised explosive devices. The Scheme ensures that these threats are minimised. The Scheme will continue to develop in line with legislation and industry changes. This will be carried out in conjunction with the industry and stakeholders to ensure FIAS continues to meet the needs of the industry both now and in the future."*

John Kelley

Managing Director, AIC Services



## In numbers

Scheme data is collected and reviewed by AIC Services and the FIAS committees, including information on Participant numbers per industry sector, numbers of audits completed, numbers of non-conformances raised and the most common non-conformances seen.

### Number of Participants

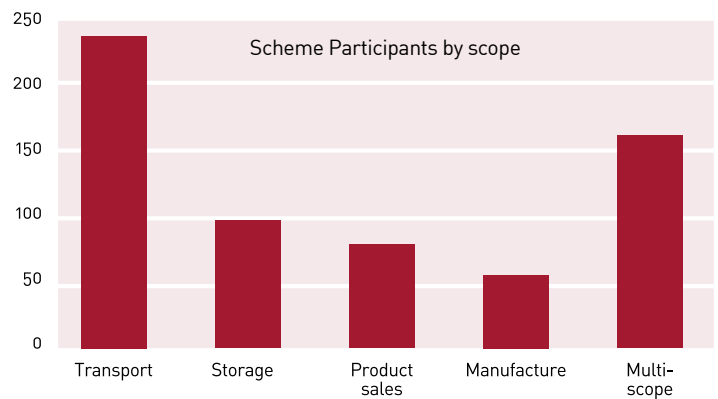


\* as of May 2023. Total number of certified Participant sites.

\*\* 106 responses from AIC Services survey in 2022.

All of this information is used to ensure the scheme operates as required, is fulfilling its role in assurance of the fertiliser supply chain and where changes to the Standard or guidance may be required or additional training provided for participants.

### Key graphs and trends



### FIAS Participant feedback

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My business benefits from being in the Scheme	24 (45.3%)	21 (39.6%)	7 (13.2%)	1 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)
It is useful to have an external audit to maintain standards	32 (61.5%)	17 (32.7%)	3 (5.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
The Scheme helps me comply with regulations	34 (64.2%)	17 (32.1%)	1 (1.9%)	1 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)
My customers require me to be certified by the Scheme	35 (66.0%)	7 (13.2%)	9 (17%)	2 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Overall I am satisfied with the Scheme	27 (52.9%)	20 (39.2%)	3 (5.9%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Data from 53 feedback questionnaire responses for period Jan-Jun 2023

## Support for Participants

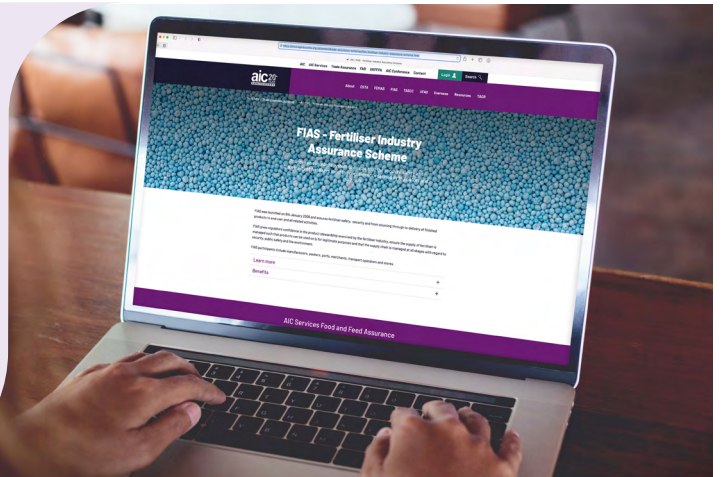
As soon as a fertiliser business joins the FIAS Scheme, they have access to support from both AIC Services and Kiwa Agri Food.

Direct contact can be made with the Scheme managers in both organisations regarding queries on interpretation, how the FIAS Standard is applied and for general advice on compliance.



VISIT THE FIAS WEBSITE

SCAN THE CODE  
← TO FIND OUT MORE



READ THE FULL REPORT SCAN THE CODE TO FIND OUT MORE →



**aic** 20  
YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY  
SERVICES

Agricultural Industries Confederation Limited  
First Floor, Unit 4 The Forum,  
Minerva Business Park, Lynch Wood,  
Peterborough, PE2 6FT.  
Tel: 01733 385230

Email: [enquiries@agindustries.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@agindustries.org.uk)



**Kiwa Agri Food is the Certification Body for FIAS**  
Kiwa Agri Food  
The Inspire, Hornbeam Square West,  
Harrogate, HG2 8PA  
Tel: 01423 878873  
Email: [ukfias@kiwa.com](mailto:ukfias@kiwa.com)



Design &  
Development  
by RDP