

20th August 2018 – RPA Industry Partnership Group (IPG) Meeting Notes

1. BPS 2017
 - 1.1. 99.8% claims completed (approx. 60 outstanding – usually bank account or probate issues)
 - 1.2. Payment Query process
 - 1.2.1. Circa 400 outstanding 2015 queries ('stock')
 - 1.2.2. Extra 530 queries outstanding raised pre 12th March 2018 ('stock')
 - 1.2.3. Extra 1,800 queries outstanding raised post 12th March 2018 ('flow')
 - 1.3. 'Stock' cases (930 versus 6,000 at April IPG) should have all been written to this summer with an update and a named caseworker. This caseworker should be available for further communication – please email me examples if you are finding this not to be the case? Target for completion (of stock cases) now slipped to 'this autumn' - disappointing.
2. Communications
 - 2.1. Communications plan through to June 2019 being developed.
3. Mapping
 - 3.1. RLE1s submitted pre 15th May 2018 should all be completed by 31st August.
 - 3.2. Feedback to RPA that email/phone communication over RLE1 queries is very helpful
 - 3.3. Target improved communication over 2018/19 PLCD changes, hedges, etc. Look at emailable RLE1 forms. Opportunity for separate Agent Stakeholder meeting focus groups.
4. Policy Updates
 - 4.1. 2019 Changes
 - 4.1.1. Conclusion to 'optional changes' for 2019 – Minister has decided not to make any changes for BPS/Greening 2019. Stability preferred.
 - 4.1.2. Hedge protection zone – Minister decision awaited on whether to remove exemption for small fields, or remove Cross Compliance regulation altogether – decision likely in October (EU won't permit the current 'discrimination').
 - 4.2. EU CAP Reforms
 - 4.2.1. Commission proposal to cap all Pillar 1/2 payments at €100,000 pa. But overwhelming disagreement from member states so unlikely to happen.
 - 4.3. Dry Weather
 - 4.3.1. Grazing of fallow land – grazing of all fallow land is (and has always been) permitted outside of the fallow period (January to June). Question whether a 2019 derogation could be sought if grazing required in January? Other EFAs could be used instead (NB Field Buffer Strips are grazeable).
 - 4.3.2. Catch crops – need to be established by today. No derogation, but sympathetic view of force majeure.
 - 4.3.3. Cover crops – derogation to graze? Probably not, as less than 800 farmers chose cover crops and many of these do not have livestock, or will have compensatory EFA. Also, mix is supposed to be unpalatable to livestock.
5. Forward Look
 - 5.1 Natural England translation into RPA
 - 5.2 Feedback on proactive improvements for 2019 BPS application process
 - 5.3 Initial 2020 Outlook

Next meeting – 25th September 2018

Peter Walker, BIAC