



The Dairy Transport Assurance Scheme (DTAS)

The Dairy Transport Assurance Scheme (DTAS) provides assurance to milk purchasers that the transport of raw milk and milk fractions meets food safety requirements, recognised industry good practice and specific customer needs.

It is administered by Dairy UK and overseen by a Management Committee drawn from the major milk purchasers and hauliers in the UK as well as a representative from Red Tractor. Membership of the scheme covers over 95% of milk haulage capacity in the UK.

The scheme is based on annual inspections of the milk haulage depots operated by scheme members.

The Standards changed to Modular Accreditation from May 1st 2023, whereby each member is audited for Module A: General Management and the member decides which of the following modules should also be included in their audit, according to the scope of their operation:

- Module B: Sub-depots, Outbased Reloads (OBR) and Use of Lay-bys
- Module C: Farm Collection and Roadside Collection
- Module D: Reload
- Module E: Milk Fractions
- Module F: Depot On-site CIP
- Module G: Traction-only

The standards are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they comply with current legislation and includes any issues that have arisen during the course of the depot assessments process which are not already covered.

Since 1 April 2015, it has been a requirement that all dairy products carrying the Red Tractor logo have to use milk that has been hauled by a DTAS approved haulier. Alongside the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme for Dairy Farms, the Red Tractor First Purchaser Scheme, the BRC Global Standard for food processing (or SALSA) and the Red Tractor Licensing requirements, the DTAS scheme completes the proposition behind the Red Tractor Logo/claim of farm to pack assurance of the dairy supply chain.

The scheme is funded entirely from subscriptions paid by members, of which there are two types:

- *Full members* are those organisations operating tankers involved in the transportation of milk and its liquid milk fractions (e.g. cream, skim, skim concentrate, whey and whey concentrate). These organisations can be:
 - Milk Purchasers, i.e. dairy farmer co-ops, private dairy companies or PLCs running their own milk haulage operations, or
 - Haulage companies contracted to milk purchasers.
- *Associate members* are either:
 - Those milk purchasers that have no haulage operations of their own but who rely on contracted hauliers and who are committed to the implementation of the scheme, or
 - Suppliers to the haulage industry that have an interest in the development of the standards, e.g. tanker manufacturers, companies involved in the provision of CIP equipment, hire tankers etc.

Depot assessments.

In order for a depot to be certified as compliant under the terms of the scheme, each one must pass an annual assessment. If there are any sub-depots associated with the site, the assessor will visit at least one of them and one outbased site, if they are used by the depot. Subsequent visits will cover any other sub-depots and outbased reload sites by rotation.

Milk purchasers are responsible for assigning an assessor and fixing the date of the assessment visit for their own haulage depots and they are also responsible for assigning an assessor and agreeing with the haulier the date of the assessment for hauliers contracted to the purchaser.

Any depots that are not contracted to any purchaser, or to more than one purchaser, will have their assessments carried out by an Independent Assessor, authorised under the scheme.

If the assessor deems that the depot is fully compliant with the standards, they then they will inform Dairy UK, through the Certification Report that is completed after each assessment, and a certificate is then sent to the depot confirming this. If, however, there are any non-compliance issues, then the depot has a maximum of 28 days to rectify them and provide evidence to the assessor that the necessary actions have been taken to meet the requirements of the standards. The assessor will then send the summary report to Dairy UK, confirming the depot is compliant and the certificate is issued.

The scheme also requires that all hauliers undertake a half-yearly internal self-assessment to ensure standards are complied with.

Training.

In order to become an assessor, each person must attend a two-day training course, which incorporates classroom training, a practice assessment and an exam that they are required to pass. Within six months, they are required to undertake their first assessment, which is shadowed by an existing registered DTAS assessor, and, subject to the shadow assessor making a favourable report to the Management Committee, their assessor status will be confirmed.

In order to retain their status, any assessor undertaking two or more assessments a year must attend an annual training event and assessors undertaking only one assessment per year are required to attend the training event at least once every two years.

Random Audits.

In addition to the scheduled audits, a maximum of four Random Audits by Independent Assessors are authorised throughout the year to ensure consistent application of the standards. In order to focus on the assessors that have the greatest impact on the operation of the scheme, the most active assessors are targeted and an existing assessor is requested to visit a site within 10 weeks of the initial assessment and determine whether there are any non-compliance issues that should have been identified at the time. They will report their findings to the original assessor and the Management Committee for consideration.

Verification Audits.

The second assessment of a DTAS trainee assessor will be subject to a Verification Audit and these will be held as required in addition to the (minimum of) four Random Audits that are arranged each year. The selection of the Verification Auditor, and the Verification Audit process, are detailed in the DTAS Random / Verification Audits Guidelines and Procedures document (Annex 4) of the Operating Protocol.

Shadow audits.

A further check to ensure consistent application of the standards is that any company employing more than one active assessor is required to ensure that each one undertakes at least one shadow assessment with another assessor during the course of the year. One assessor acts as an observer whilst the other takes the lead role and is responsible for all decisions on standards compliance. In the following year, a shadow assessment should be arranged between different assessors and the roles reversed.

HACCP.

One of the requirements of the DTAS standards is that the haulier must have a documented HACCP in place that fully covers all aspects of milk collection and delivery. The generic Dairy UK HACCP, which is reviewed annually, can be used to comply with these standards, as long as the haulage depot has been involved in the annual review process.

Annual Conference.

An annual conference is held and all assessors and members are expected to attend. During this event updates will be given on the changes proposed by the Standards Working Group, new members, the HACCP review, forthcoming training, scheme statistics, non-compliance data, membership fees, administrative issues and any new projects that have been undertaken.

Where to find information.

- The DTAS website is found at <http://www.dairytransport.co.uk/dtas/home.eb>
- A list of scheme members and all depots that have been approved under the scheme is shown at: <http://www.dairytransport.co.uk/dtas/members.eb>

In order to confirm that the depot is compliant under the DTAS scheme, the current certificate for each approved depot can be viewed/downloaded from this page.

- Key scheme documents can be viewed/downloaded at:

<http://www.dairytransport.co.uk/dtas/documents.eb>

- A list of the independent assessors can be found at:

<http://www.dairytransport.co.uk/dtas/Independent%20Assessors.eb>

This gives their contact details, where each one is located and the countries (or part thereof) they are prepared to travel to in order to conduct an assessment.

- Any enquiries or questions relating to the scheme should be directed to Ian Wakeling (the Scheme Administrator) by any of the following means:
 - **Address:** DTAS, c/o Dairy UK, 6th Floor, 210 High Holborn, London WC1V 7EP
 - **Email:** iwakeling@dairyuk.org
 - **Phone:** 07766 860556