



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency

APHA Briefing Note 39/25

Reducing the risk of resolved standard inconclusive reactors in Wales

Date issued: 27 October 2025

Purpose

1. To inform Official Veterinarians (OVs) and Approved Tuberculin Testers (ATTs) testing in Wales of the new resolved standard inconclusive reactor (IR) policy being introduced in Wales from 1 January 2026.
2. Under this new policy, all standard interpretation IRs disclosed in Wales that have a negative result on re-testing will be restricted for the rest of their life to the holding in which they were found.

Background

1. Multiple peer reviewed scientific studies have demonstrated that resolved standard IR animals have a significantly higher likelihood of becoming reactors than clear tested animals, and as such present an increased risk of spreading TB.
2. Restricting resolved IRs for life to the holding in which they were found minimises transfer of this risk to other herds.

What's changing?

1. From 1 January 2026, all standard interpretation IRs in Wales that have a negative result on re-testing will be restricted for the rest of their life to their current holding.
2. The only permitted off movements for such animals will be to slaughter either directly or via an Approved Finishing Unit (AFU) under an individual or general licence issued by APHA.

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3. Movements of resolved standard IRs to AFUs can occur directly or via a TB Dedicated Sale (Orange Market). Movement to slaughter can occur directly or via an Approved Slaughter Gathering.
4. Resolved standard IRs will be restricted following their clear re-test and keepers will receive a restriction notice in the post.
5. Resolved standard IRs will be restricted for life to the holding in which they were found, and this holding must have a permanent County Parish Holding (CPH) number. If a resolved standard IR is residing at temporary grazing or common land when it re-tests clear, it will be restricted to the permanent CPH associated with the temporary grazing. Once the resolved standard IR moves back to the permanent CPH, it must be restricted to that CPH and cannot move back to a temporary CPH or common land.
6. It is the keeper's responsibility to ensure that a resolved standard IR is restricted for life to the holding in which it was found. Whilst not mandatory, it is recommended that the animal is physically identified to prevent accidental movement off the holding.
7. APHA will carry out checks of resolved standard IRs to ensure that they remain restricted for life. Where it is found that a resolved standard IR has moved, other than to slaughter or an AFU/AFUEs, APHA will serve an individual animal restriction notice restricting the animal to the new herd. Non compliances will be referred to the Local Authority for investigation and any enforcement action that they deem necessary.
8. Unlike in England, the option of interferon gamma blood testing to release resolved IRs from life-long restrictions will not be available to cattle keepers in Wales.

Action

1. OV and ATTs will need to inform cattle keepers of this new policy being implemented from 1 January 2026. Under this policy, any IRs disclosed at standard interpretation that retest with negative results on or after 1 January 2026 will be considered resolved standard IRs and will remain restricted for life to the current holding. This new policy includes animals disclosed as standard IRs before 1 January 2026 and retested with negative results on or after this date.

Further Information

1. The following APHA documents are being updated at this time:
 - TB181 Automatic Animal and Public Health restrictions following disclosure of a Reactor or IR at an official diagnostic TB test in cattle, buffalo or bison
 - TR586 Tuberculin skin test audit: Minimum requirements
2. OV and ATT instructions and other APHA documents will be updated closer to 1st January 2025.

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3. Further information is available on the Welsh Government website at <https://www.gov.wales/bovine-tb-whole-life-restrictions-resolved-standard-interpretation-inconclusive-reactors>
4. Please refer any queries to APHA.CymruWales@apha.gov.uk

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