

Welcome to your latest Biomass Suppliers List (BSL) Newsletter

Please find the BSL October issue containing the latest news and updates on policy changes, statistics, and ongoing developments and improvements within the Scheme.

We always like to hear from you. If you have any feedback on this edition or ideas for future newsletters, please email BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com.

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Coronavirus Update

Helpdesk Opening hours

We are continuing to run the usual BSL Helpdesk service (phone line open Monday – Friday from 10am – 2pm). Please send your enquiry to BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com and a response will be provided within five working days.

Audits

The BSL Administrator is now conducting site as well as desk-based audits. This will be reviewed in line with ongoing Government advice.

Should you undergo a desk-based audit, please review our document – [Preparing for a BSL Desk-Based Audit](#) for more information.

BSL Supplier Feedback

The BSL Administrator has produced a short survey to ask Suppliers for their feedback on the service delivered, including in terms of the Helpdesk, communications, applications and payments process.

We would greatly appreciate any comments on the service you receive, including how this could be enhanced. This will ensure the BSL continues to support its Suppliers.

Please click the following link to access the survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MRCCKTP>

We thank you for your time and feedback.

Payment Information

Outstanding payments

BSL Suppliers are required to submit payments for any outstanding charges from 2018 and 2019. If payment is not received by 30/11/20, your BSL number will be removed.

Q3 2020 Payments for Producer-Traders and Traders due

If you have not done so already, Producer-Traders, Producers and Traders are now required to submit their total amount of woodfuel sold for Q3 2020 between 01/07/2020 and 31/09/2020. Please provide this information for each of your approved fuels on the BSL.

To ensure your authorised fuels continue to be included on the BSL, all Suppliers are required to submit their quarterly reporting data and/or pay their membership fees.

Firstly, [click here](#) to login to your BSL account under the 'Registered Suppliers' section of the BSL website. Then, click on the quarterly reminder, 'Quarterly Report is now due'.

If you do not complete these activities on time, **your BSL authorised fuel(s) will be removed** and your BSL number(s) will no longer be valid for claiming Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) payments.

Updated UK Risk-Based Regional Assessment (RBRA) Form

The UK Risk-Based Regional Assessment (RBRA) form has been updated to v1.3.

The RBRA allows woodfuel buyers and suppliers to provide Category B evidence, as defined in the [Timber Standard](#), for compliance with the woodfuel land criteria without the use of certification (UK suppliers only). These suppliers upload a completed RBRA at the time of applying to the BSL to demonstrate a low risk of them not complying with the land criteria in the future.

UK suppliers should use this template if Category A and Category B evidence (Forestry Woodland Plan and Felling Licence) is not available.

The updates to v1.3 of the UK RBRA include formatting amendments and updated Forestry Commission statistics. The form was published on the BSL website on 05/10/20 and can be accessed via the [Documents and guidance page](#).

From 05/10/20, all new relevant BSL applications are required to include completion and submission of v1.3 of the RBRA.

Please email BSLHelpdesk@gemserv.com if you have any questions.

Changes to Global Forest Registry

The [Global Forest Registry](#) provides countries with a “Timber Risk Score”, which is based on its assessment of the risk of illegality occurring in 21 areas of law relevant to timber legality. A low score dictates a greater widespread risk of timber illegality in the country. This risk score can change over time.

Previously, for fuels which have been produced overseas, or which contain any percentage of non-UK timber, and where unable to provide Category A evidence, applicants had been permitted to submit a bespoke RBRA as an alternative for BSL Land Criteria requirements. A bespoke RBRA will now only be appropriate for fuels where 100% of the raw materials come from a country that has been deemed to have a timber risk score of 100.

If you wish to import timber or a fuel produced from a country which has a timber risk score under 100 on the GFR website, your supplier must hold Category A evidence (FSC, SBP, PEFC certification) to be compliant.

The change could affect fuels either imported or containing biomass from the following countries: Bulgaria, China, Georgia, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine. We therefore ask our Suppliers who may be affected to review their current applications by **January 2021** and, if applicable, reapply providing Category A evidence for all fuels by **31/07/21**.

Any applicable fuels which have not been updated by 31/07/21 may be removed as they will no longer be compliant.

Key Industry Updates - Non-Domestic RHI Deadline Extension

Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) intends to extend the deadline for Non-Domestic RHI for projects that are non-Tariff Guarantee eligible. Due to the Coronavirus, existing non-Tariff Guarantee eligible projects may struggle to apply for Non-Domestic RHI accreditation before the closure on 31/03/21.

BEIS will likely afford an **additional six months after the closure date of 31/03/21**, subject to applicants submitting an 'extension application'. This will require declarative evidence demonstrating that the project was under development prior to publication from BEIS regarding the extension. The final list of evidence required for an extension application is expected to be published by BEIS shortly.

The extension excludes Combined Heat Power (CHP) installations and biomass greater than or equal to 600kWth/biomass greater than or equal to 1MWth. Applicants must submit their extension application before 31/03/20. Once approved, applicants will have an additional six months to commission their plant and apply for Non-Domestic RHI accreditation from BEIS.

BEIS requested feedback from this extension notice via a consultation, which closed on 07/09/20. For more information, please visit [Changes to RHI support and COVID-19 response: further government response](#).

Green Homes Grant Scheme

The [Green Homes Grant scheme](#) announced over Summer 2020 offers homeowners and landlords in England a voucher that can cover up to two thirds of the cost of an energy efficient or low carbon heating system for their property. Primary measures which are available to install include insulation, heat pumps, solar thermal and biomass boiler installations. Secondary measures can also be included in the voucher, including window glazing, hot water tank insulation and heating controls.

The Green Homes Grant scheme will support biomass installations: any biomass heating systems installed via the Scheme will have to use approved sustainable fuel listed on the BSL. The Scheme is likely to increase the number of BSL applications, as well as **increase the overall demand for BSL fuel**.

Given the likely increase in the demand for BSL fuel, please ensure your BSL account is kept up to date. It is important that RHI customers/Green Homes Grant Scheme participants hold the correct information regarding their fuel.

Please find here [the link](#) to access the additional requirements around low carbon heat for the Green Homes Grant scheme.

Meet the Team: Eve



Hi BSL,

My name is Eve and I have been working in the BSL Administrator team for seven months. I have four years' experience in the governance of the retail energy market, having provided client-facing services to several industry contracts – initially focused on energy and more recently including energy efficiency schemes too.

As the Governance Consultant for the BSL team, I manage the governance of the BSL Advisory Panel. This comprises of a

panel of elected industry experts, Government and other stakeholder representatives who advise BEIS on the direction of the BSL.

My role includes managing Panel meetings and documentation; working with the Chair and Panel Members; and leading Panel actions. This year, this included the circulation of two surveys assessing the anticipated risks of COVID-19 on biomass supply chains. I enjoy working with others in the team to deliver a high quality service for the BSL.

I initially developed my knowledge of sustainable energy through my Undergraduate Geography studies at the University of Exeter and I regularly review industry publications to follow industry developments. I am excited to expand my knowledge to support the effective delivery of the BSL, to help as the UK works towards achieving net zero. Please get in touch if you have any questions we can assist with.

BSL Frequently Asked Questions

To support you in completing your BSL application, please see below for clear answers to frequently asked questions.

Q. If I am already registered on the BSL, will I have to pay the application fee?

A. You won't need to pay application fees for your authorised fuels on the BSL, nor will you have to pay for applications submitted before January 2017. However, if you submit any new applications after 01/01/17, you will need to pay an application fee.

Q. How will I know how much tonnage fees I will need to pay?

A. If you are Producer, Trader or Producer-Trader, your tonnage fee will be calculated based on the number of tonnes your company has sold across all your BSL registered fuels in the previous three months. You will be charged nine pence for each tonne sold. For fuel types that are not normally reported in tonnes, you can report in cubic metres and the system will convert these volumes fairly and calculate how much you'll need to pay. You must submit your quarterly reporting figures for all your fuels at the same time. If you are a Self-Supplier, you don't have to submit quarterly reporting figures and don't have to pay a tonnage fee.

Q. What is the difference between a raw material and a fuel?

A. Raw materials are set to undergo further processing (e.g. cutting, drying, chipping) before they are used in a boiler. A fuel is something that will not undergo any further processing before it is used in a boiler. The BSL is not a list of raw materials, it is a list of fuels, and suppliers of raw materials should not seek to register those raw materials. The BSL has four fuel types: firewood, chip, pellet and briquette.

Q. I supply roundwood/logs to someone who processes them into chip or cuts and dries them further before use or sale to consumers/traders. Should I register?

A. No. You are supplying materials which will undergo further processing into fuel before they are used. Unless you are supplying fuels you should not make an application to the BSL. However, those on the list will require you to supply the distance the timber has travelled from the forest.

Q. How do I make payment?

A. Fees are payable using PayPal, or alternatively by debit or credit card. No fees will be charged for using PayPal, debit card or credit card. Membership fees will be automatically calculated by the BSL portal based on your registration and fuel information and will be visible when Suppliers login into their account. Once paid, a receipt will be automatically sent to the Supplier. This receipt meets the requirements of a valid VAT invoice as specified by HMRC.

Q. I have my own woodland and process this timber myself for use in my own boiler. However, I also purchase extra roundwood and process this myself to supplement my own supply. Am I still a Self-Supplier?

A. if you are processing raw materials (roundwood) bought in from elsewhere into fuel, and wish to use the BSL to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria (as opposed to self-reporting to Ofgem), then you should register as a Producer-Trader. You can include the timber you source from your own woodland as a raw material within this application, and do not need to complete a separate Self-Supplier application.

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Total Authorised Fuels

Table 1 below presents a breakdown of the total number of BSL authorised Suppliers as of 1st October 2020 by Supplier type.

Table 2 on the right presents a monthly overview of the total number of BSL applications authorised over the last 12 months.

The decrease in the number of authorised applications seen in December 2019 was primarily due to the BSL Administrator removing those Suppliers with outstanding membership payments.



Producer-Traders	3,069
Traders	2,213
Self-Suppliers	3,169
Producers	267

Month	Total Authorised Fuels
Oct 19	10,010
Nov 19	10,018
Dec 19	9,171
Jan 20	9,222
Feb 20	9,257
Mar 20	9,281
Apr 20	9,320
May 20	9,349
Jun 20	9,355
Jul 20	9,381
Aug 20	8,697
Sep 20	8,718

BSL Audit Statistics

The objective of an audit is to validate a Supplier’s ongoing eligibility to gain or retain its status as BSL authorised. To ensure you are following your ongoing BSL obligations, records must be kept, and comprehensive documentation must be made available during a BSL audit. The full list of required documents is available on your authorisation letter and within the [Applications and Audit Guidance](#).

The table below presents the total numbers of audits carried out in 2020, in addition to the total numbers of removals due to Non-Compliances at identified at audit.

	Number of Desk Based Audits	Number of Site Audits	Major Non-Compliance Identified at audit*	Fuels Audited	Fuels Removed from Audit	Fuels Removed from BSL
January	12	5	4	25	2	31
February	14	3	4	24	8	39
March	31	4	4	40	6	20
April	23	0	5	25	6	19
May	19	0	1	20	3	25
June	14	0	5	14	9	40
July	11	0	5	9	2	31
Aug	5	1	2	6	12	722
Sept	7	13	1	20	1	18

*Major Non-Compliances result in removal of BSL fuel number

Newsletter Feedback?

Please send your thoughts to BSLhelpdesk@gemserv.com

Contact the Biomass Suppliers List for further information

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