



Organisation
Mondiale
de la Santé
Animale

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Health

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Mundial
de Sanidad
Animal

Original: English
August 2003

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION FOR ANIMAL DISEASES
Paris, 11 – 12 August 2003**

A meeting of the Bureau of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (Scientific Commission) was held at the OIE headquarters in Paris, France from 11 to 12 August 2003. The Agenda and List of Participants are given at Appendices I and II, respectively.

The Director General of the OIE, Dr Bernard Vallat, welcomed the participants. In his address, Dr Vallat indicated the importance of integrating and harmonising the work of the three Specialist Commissions that cover terrestrial animals (the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission, the Biological Standards Commission and the Scientific Commission) and the Specialist Commission that cover aquatic animals. He listed the items that the International Committee, during the General Session in May 2003, requested that the Commission prioritise. These are: simplifying the chapter on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) and providing country recognition with regard to BSE status, revising the chapter on highly pathogenic avian influenza and the chapter on disease notification. Other prioritised issues include methods for disease surveillance, with special focus on FMD in May 2004 if possible and standards for evaluation of Veterinary Services that can be interpreted easily by Member Countries.

The President of the Commission, Dr Vincenzo Caporale, who chaired the meeting, opened the discussions on the agenda.

1. Report of the President of the Scientific Commission and elaboration of the plan of action of the Commission for the next 3 years

The Bureau reviewed the Terms of Reference of the Scientific Commission and developed a basic draft plan of action for the next 3 years (2003–2005) and discussed it with Dr Vallat. The draft of the plan of action, given at Appendix III, will be presented to the Scientific Commission for approval at its meeting in December 2003. The Bureau noted the need for:

- the active engagement of OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres in the activities of the Scientific Commission;
- the need to take into account the opinions of the OIE Delegates as expressed in the Recommendations and Resolutions of the Regional Commissions and the International Committee with regard to define priority animal health issues;

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- the need to prioritise the requests received from the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission,
- the need to develop a core group of epidemiologists to be involved as often as possible in the Ad hoc Groups committed to review the dossiers concerning recognition of country status with regard to foot and mouth disease (FMD), bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), Rinderpest (RP), and contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP);
- the need for a presence of Commission members in the meetings of all the Ad hoc Groups activated under the responsibility of the Scientific Commission.

2. Formation of Ad hoc Groups

The need to convene Ad hoc Groups to address the most relevant issues requested by the Commission was reviewed.

The formation of an Ad hoc Group on Epidemiology (disease surveillance, zoning, regionalisation and compartmentalisation, general guidelines and participation on country status recognition when necessary) to assist the Commission with these matters was discussed. The Vice-President of the Scientific Commission will develop Terms of Reference for this Group for September. These will then be sent to the Central Bureau for circulation by e-mail to all Members of the Scientific Commission for approval.

It was agreed to convene an Ad hoc Group on Antigens and Vaccine Banks; full Terms of Reference for the Ad hoc Group will be prepared by the Central Bureau based on the documentation presented by Argentina, for discussion during the next Scientific Commission meeting in December and prompt implementation of a proposal to the International Committee.

The proposal for an interactive forum for discussing emerging animal health issues or other issues identified by the Scientific Commission was discussed and welcomed. Participation by Reference Laboratories and Collaborative Centres will be essential for the success of this forum, and would have to be coordinated by the designed OIE Expert assisted by the Central Bureau. This activity should be coordinated with the Biological Standards Commission.

The Central Bureau will establish new Terms of reference for an Ad hoc Group on Carcass Disposal and will inform the Scientific Commission at its next meeting in December for further consideration.

3. Review matters referred by the Terrestrial Animal Health Standard Commission

FMD, to be reviewed at the December meeting for comments from Member Countries, and on additional issues, the Central Bureau on behalf of the Scientific Commission will consult the Reference Laboratory for FMD in Pirbright for an expert report. A new proposal will be presented to the International Committee in May 2004.

Consultation on classical swine fever issues will be made from the Central Bureau with the Reference Laboratories on classical swine fever and the report will be presented to the Scientific Commission at its December meeting.

Scientific issues related to highly pathogen avian influenza and Newcastle disease will be addressed by an Ad hoc Group on highly pathogen avian influenza and Newcastle disease together with the Terrestrial Animals Commission.

Surveillance guidelines for scrapie and Aujeszky's disease will be discussed during the next Scientific Commission meeting and will then be referred to an Ad hoc Group.

Paratuberculosis; the Bureau noted that the Terrestrial Animals Commission has started consultation with an expert and is waiting for its report to comment further.

4. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy

A meeting of the Ad hoc Group for Country evaluation will be held in September and the outcome will be evaluated during the Commission's December meeting. The meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the Ad hoc Group on BSE standards to address among others, the issue of the criteria for the classification of countries and how to assess other TSE's. Both Presidents of the Terrestrial Animals Commission and Scientific Commission will participate at this meeting. These two ad hoc groups will have a common meeting during one day.

5. Comments on *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapter on Animal Health Surveillance

Revision of the chapter was undertaken in order to simplify the draft presented by the Ad hoc Group. The original and revised draft versions of the proposed Chapter 1.3.6 will be circulated among members of the Scientific Commission for final discussion at its December meeting.

6. Any other business

6.1. Bluetongue free status of Bulgaria

The Bureau took notice of the letter from the Director General of the Veterinary Services in Bulgaria, Dr Yanko Ivanov, with information regarding self declaration of the bluetongue free status of Bulgaria.

6.2. OIE Bluetongue International Symposium

The President of the Scientific Commission reported on the advances made in the preparation of the OIE Bluetongue International Symposium, which will be held from 26 to 29 October 2003 in Taormina, Italy.

6.3. OIE Conference on the Control of Infectious Animal Diseases by Vaccination

The Preliminary announcement of the OIE International Conference on the Control of Infectious Animal Diseases by Vaccination, to be held from 13 to 16 April 2004 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, was considered, and further information will be delivered for the Scientific Commission December meeting.

6.4. Information from Argentina

The Bureau of the Commission took notice of the preventive measures adopted by Argentina that were detailed in five reports sent to the OIE following the FMD outbreaks in the region. The Bureau congratulated the Argentinean Veterinary Services for the prompt response to the emergency and for the information provided.

.../Appendices

**MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
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Paris, 11–12 August 2003**

Agenda

1. Report of the President of the Scientific Commission and elaboration of the plan of action of the Commission for the next 3 years
2. Formation of Ad hoc Groups
3. Review matters referred by the Terrestrial Animal Health Standard Commission
4. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
5. Comments on *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Chapter on Animal Health Surveillance
6. Any other matters
 - 6.1. Bluetongue free status of Bulgaria
 - 6.2. OIE Bluetongue International Symposium
 - 6.3. OIE Conference on the Control of Infectious Animal Diseases by Vaccination
 - 6.4. Information from Argentina

**MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION FOR ANIMAL DISEASES
Paris, 11–12 August 2003**

List of participants

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Plan of action of the Commission for the next 3 years

TERMS OF REFERENCES & TASKS		MEANS OF FULFILLMENT	COMMENTS
1	To maintain and exchange information on all aspects of terrestrial animal diseases, and to assess recent developments in the practical problems of control and eradication of infectious diseases and the impact of these developments.	Collaborating Centres and Reference Laboratories should become actively engaged in this endeavour becoming facilitators of permanent forums activated in the OIE internet site mainly under SC page and providing annual/or emergency if needed synopsis with the relevant issues that need to be addressed	Activity to be carried out in collaboration with the BSC. Letter to reference laboratories by the CB.
2	To provide scientific guidance to the OIE on the development of policies relating to the assessment and control of diseases, notably those with the potential to affect trade in terrestrial animals and their products or affect human health.	A tentative could be made to address this issue launching an annual survey conducted among the Delegates asking which are the Animal Diseases problems that represent their PRIORITY and the main difficulties encountered in their control. A yearly event [expert consultation, conference, workshop] should be organized by the OIE with its own experts (mainly from reference laboratories & collaborating centres) to address the issues which appear to be the main problems worldwide and try to propose the most suitable solutions.	SC will identify 3-4 relevant animal health issues of worldwide impact by consulting the latest OIE Regional Commissions recommendations and IC resolutions to be consulted and prioritized by the Country Delegates (letter to be prepared by the CB).
3	To assist the Director General (DG) in improving the collection, use and interpretation of statistical information on terrestrial animal diseases, including emerging diseases, for the benefit of OIE Member Countries.	An <i>ad hoc</i> group of «relevant users» should be identified by the central bureau assisted by the SC & TAHSC presidents to define need. Every two years an evaluation meeting should be organized by the SC and convened by the DG.	A meeting with the OIE Information Department will be agendaed for each SC meeting
4	To provide up-to-date scientific information to the DG and the other OIE Specialist Commissions, gathered through its own resources or in consultation with scientists, experts and Ad hoc Groups.	This is a "on demand" activity that should, however, be organized and planned adequately as is probably the main responsibility of the Commission. In general, the DG and the other OIE Specialist Commissions, therefore, should declare their need at the beginning or each semester as to allow the organization of an adequate response.	An agenda of prioritized items will be prepared to be discussed and implemented during the next SC meeting
5	To advise and assist the DG on problems relating to such diseases, including problems of disease control at the regional and global level.	On demand activity	
6	To propose procedures for formally recognizing the animal health status of OIE Member Countries.	This activity, at present, is based on a «system» resulting from the «stratification» of many years of experience. The net result that is expected is a coherent system by convening a core group of epidemiologist to assist in country status recognition. The core group of epidemiologists will be invited to participate as often as possible in each one of the ad hoc groups of countries status recognition.	Ad-hoc groups on zoning, regionalization and compartmentalization disease surveillance and ad hoc groups of country status recognition (for FMD, BSE, Rinderpest and CBPP) will be established to support the work of the Commission on the various items demanded.

TERMS OF REFERENCES & TASKS		MEANS OF FULFILLMENT	COMMENTS
7	To undertake, on behalf of the International Committee (IC), the assessment of OIE Member Country applications for compliance with OIE standards for freedom from specific terrestrial animal diseases (FMD, Rinderpest, BSE, CBPP).	The first assessment will be carried out by the relevant ad hoc groups for each one of the diseases if necessary. All proposals to the International Committee should be endorsed before by Scientific Commission.	Same as above (6)
8	To identify issues that require in-depth review and propose, to the DG, the composition and terms of reference of experts or Ad hoc Groups of experts convened specifically to study such issues, and if necessary, to participate in the work of these Groups.	As in number 4 as far as issues «on demand». Other issues could arise from activities in number 1 and 2 and should be addressed according to their nature & relevance.	
9	To advise the DG on the composition and the activities of the Working group on Wildlife diseases and to coordinate its work.	On demand activity. Nothing has been asked by the DG as yet. In any case the date of the meeting of the group should be decided in consultation with the SC Bureau.	Consult on the agenda, report and meeting participation will be required.
10	To reply to relevant queries relating to the methods for the control of terrestrial animal diseases.	On demand activity	
11	To represent the OIE at scientific and specialized conferences upon the request of the DG.	On demand activity	To prepare and agenda for the next SC meeting with the relevant meetings were the OIE-SC should be present.

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