Launching the new OIE global information system
editorial

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Since the creation of the OIE’s new Animal Health Information Department in January 2002, major efforts have been made to improve the transparency, efficiency and speed with which animal health information is disseminated to Member Countries and to make the information more readily available to the general public. In addition to being posted on the Web, this information is automatically sent to Delegates of OIE Member Countries and the Organisation’s partners, as well as to any person or institution subscribing to the OIE’s electronic mailing list, a service provided free of charge. This new approach gives a wider audience of users access to emergency information and ensures that the OIE remains the major provider of animal health information worldwide.

In parallel, the user-friendliness and coverage of the OIE Web site have been enhanced, with the creation of new sections and the provision of access to archived information not previously available to end-users (archives of the weekly information publication, archives of country reports contained in the annual publication ‘World Animal Health’, etc.). Mapping to illustrate disease distribution worldwide has also recently been introduced. One of the main achievements since 2002 has been the shift away from a ‘mailbox’ type of relationship between the OIE and its Member Countries towards a network management approach in dealing with animal health information. This has improved the quality and the quantity of information provided by Member countries year after year.

The active search and verification procedure for unofficial information from various sources that was introduced in 2002 has become more and more effective each year. Its results have improved the exhaustiveness of the OIE’s information in general, and the credibility of official information from certain Member Countries in particular.

Another step forward in improving the OIE’s animal health information has been to replace the previous disease lists A and B with a single OIE list of diseases, selected on the basis of criteria established in 2004, and to change the notification procedures. These new procedures, introduced in January 2005, provide a clearer definition of epidemiological events requiring immediate notification and improve the quality of the information collected by the use of new standardised reporting forms. The previous system of monthly reporting limited to former List A diseases, whether absent or present, has now been extended to all OIE-listed diseases, based on a new six-monthly reporting procedure.

Today, all these efforts to modernise the OIE’s World Animal Health Information System have reached fruition with the advent of the WAHIS Web application, which will herald in a new era in the provision of animal health information.
WAHIS is the fruit of more than two years’ intense effort by the OIE Animal Health Information Department and the Information Systems Unit, involving the development of a 730-page technical specifications document, a call for tenders in December 2004 – January 2005, the selection of a private contractor, and the implementation of the project. As a result, Member Countries with a good Internet connection can now process their information directly using the WAHIS Web application instead of using paper forms. This will help to ensure that all Member Countries and end-users have access to real-time information. OIE Delegates can access this secure Web application and process the information needed to submit their immediate notifications and follow-up reports, six-monthly reports and annual reports. The WAHIS Web application provides each Member Country with a map to obtain the geographical coordinates of an event occurring in the country. Countries experiencing difficulty with Internet access will go on using the paper forms, which will then be processed into the WAHIS Web application at the OIE Headquarters.

Last but not least, the WAHIS output system has been modernised through the development of the WAHID Interface, providing access to the World Animal Health Database (replacing Handistatus II) and allowing end-users a wide range of queries on a given country or region, or two or more countries or regions, all with mapping support.

The two systems (Handistatus II and WAHID Interface) will coexist on the OIE Web site until the transfer of data from Handistatus II to WAHID has been completed.

The birth of WAHIS and WAHID is an event of crucial importance for OIE Member Countries. I would like to congratulate the staff of the OIE Animal Health Information Department, the Information Systems Unit, the OIE Delegates who helped to test the new system, all the other members of the OIE team involved in this project and the contractors for such an excellent job. I would also like to thank Member Countries for bearing with us during the inevitable teething problems associated with the development of any new computer system.

Bernard Vallat
Director General, OIE
Animal welfare update

Introduction
This third animal welfare update is designed to maintain awareness of progress with OIE activities involving animal welfare and is part of the OIE’s commitment to communication and consultation. Communication and consultation are vital elements of the OIE mission statement:

“To provide international leadership in animal welfare through the development of science-based standards, and guidelines, the provision of expert advice and the promotion of relevant education and research.”

This update includes reports on specific activities included in the annual work plan, plus details of selected general interest and news items of relevance to all OIE member countries.

Appointments and recognition
In early 2006, Dr Julio Pinto took over the position previously held by Dr Antonio Petrini in the OIE International Trade Department. This role is critical to the OIE work in animal welfare. Dr Petrini is thanked for his most valuable contribution, over a three year period and Dr Pinto is welcomed to his new role. Dr David Wilson, as Head of the OIE International Trade Department has recently been appointed to the newly-created position of OIE Deputy Director General and, in this capacity, will continue to play a key leadership role in working with the Animal Welfare Working Group.

In December 2005, it was announced that Animal Welfare Working Group member, Professor David Fraser had received the Order of Canada from the Canadian Government. This prestigious award recognises the outstanding contribution that Professor Fraser has made to animal welfare science and ethics both within Canada and internationally.

Aquatic animal welfare
Professor Tore Håstein and ad-Hoc Group colleagues have made excellent progress in drafting guidelines for aquatic animal welfare. These cover transport by land and sea, and slaughter for human consumption; they have been endorsed by the Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission and circulated for Member Country Comment. It is planned to continue work in the aquatic area, by drafting a third set of production-related guidelines.

Stray animal control
It has been recommended to the Director General that a sixth animal welfare ad hoc group be established with the following terms of reference:

- Identify problems caused by stray animals (zoonoses, environmental pollution, nuisance, behaviour, traffic accidents)
- Assess existing substantial stray control programmes
- Identify animal welfare issues created by stray control programmes
- Propose practical solutions to the animal welfare problems created by control programmes.

This ad hoc group is chaired by Animal Welfare Working Group member Dr Sira Abdul Rahman and has met once.

Laboratory animal science and welfare
ICLAS (International Council for Laboratory Animal Science) is a non-governmental non-profit scientific organisation for international cooperation in laboratory animal science. ICLAS was established in 1956 under the auspices of UNESCO, and is in official interaction with the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS), the Council for International Organisations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS), and the World Veterinary Association (WVA). A joint OIE/ICLAS meeting is proposed to be held in Salt Lake City in October, 2006. This meeting will help to determine the international role that OIE will play in the area of laboratory animal science and welfare.
Forthcoming Conferences

Important international meetings and conferences to be held over the next 12 months include the following:

- Welfare Working Group 4-6 July 2006
- ISAE Conference, Bristol 8-12 August 2006
- OIE/ICLAS Satellite meeting, Salt Lake City 16 October 2006

Further information on each meeting or conference is available from the OIE Central Bureau.

It is hoped that this update is proving useful to Bulletin readers and suggestions for material to be included in future issues will continue to be welcomed.

A.C. David Bayvel
Chair, Animal Welfare Working Group

Publications

- Scientific papers presented at the March 2005 CIWF (Compassion in World Farming) conference on 'The Science and Implications of Animal Sentience' will be published in a special issue of the journal Applied Animal Behaviour Science. Video abstracts of presentations made have also been included in a DVD, which is available free of charge from Compassion in World Farming (CIWF) www.ciwf.org.uk.

Policy and regulatory papers have been included in a book entitled 'Animal, Ethics and Trade' (The Challenge of Animal Sentience) edited by Jacky Turner and Joyce D'Silva, to be published by Earthscan in April, 2006.

- The OIE Scientific and Technical Review Series, publication 'Animal welfare: global issues, trends and challenges' was published in November 2005. This issue contains 26 papers from internationally recognised authors and is proving very popular. Copies are available from the OIE Sales Department using an online order form (www.oie.int).

- The International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) has prepared a Good Practice Note 'Creating Business Opportunity Through Improved Animal Welfare.' This was made available for public review and comment in February and March 2006. The final version will be available to download from the IFC website (www.ifc.org), as well as in hard copy from: Corporate Relations, International Finance Corporation, 2,121 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20433, USA.

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Summary

The rationale for establishing trade regions and zones is based on principles of epidemiological science and risk analysis to assess and manage animal disease risks in a manner to allow safe trade. However, the boundaries of geographic regions and zones may readily be breached through numerous epidemiological pathways. The concept of a compartment extends the application of a ‘risk boundary’ beyond that of a geographic interface and considers all epidemiological factors contributing to a functional separation that creates an effective boundary. The fundamental requirement for application of either concept is that the population considered for trade maintains a functional separation through management or geographic boundaries allowing clear epidemiological differentiation from populations of higher risk. Seven factors are presented that an exporting country might use to guide the identification and documentation of a compartment. Additionally, the steps that would be undertaken to implement trade based on the compartmentalisation concept are discussed.

Keywords


Introduction

The objective of this document is to describe the concept of a ‘compartment’ and to develop criteria and guidelines for the application of this concept as laid down in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) concerning facilitation of trade in animals and products of animal origin.

The difficulty of establishing and maintaining a disease free status for an entire country, especially for diseases the entry of which is difficult to control at national boundaries, has been acknowledged. For many diseases, OIE Member Countries have traditionally applied the concept of zoning to establish and maintain an animal subpopulation with a different animal health status within national boundaries. Recently, the concept of compartmentalisation was introduced to the Terrestrial Code and the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code (Aquatic Code) as an alternative way to manage disease and pathogens in animal populations without unnecessarily disrupting trade. Regionalisation/zoning can be thought of as recognising animal subpopulations with a distinct health status based on geographical boundaries, while compartmentalisation is based primarily on management practices and biosecurity. However, spatial considerations and good management practices play a role in the application of both concepts. Compartmentalisation is not a new concept.
for Veterinary Services; in fact, it has been applied for a long time in many disease control programmes that are based on the concept of disease-free herds/flocks. Examples of such programmes include tuberculosis, brucellosis and pseudorabies. The intent of this document is to provide a structured framework for the application and recognition of compartments within countries or zones.

The fundamental requirement for application of either concept is that the animal population considered for trade maintains a functional separation through management or geographic boundaries that allow a clear epidemiological differentiation from populations of differing health status. For example, a confinement operation of poultry or swine might have biosecurity measures and management practices that result in virtually zero risk from diseases or agents in the same geographic area. On the other hand, a geographically isolated population of animals might have substantial risk from travellers, tourists, or other long range epidemiological links. Thus the concept of a compartment extends the application of a ‘risk boundary’ beyond that of a geographic interface and considers all epidemiological factors contributing to a functional separation that creates an effective boundary.

The main criterion for a compartment is that the animals contained in it are clearly recognisable as part of a unique subpopulation with limited or no epidemiological links to other populations of risk. The measures taken to ensure the identification of the subpopulation and the recognition and maintenance of its health status should be documented in detail and must take into consideration the epidemiologic characteristics of the disease in question.

In disease control strategies the compartments preferably should be defined prior to the occurrence of a disease outbreak. Following a disease outbreak, compartmentalisation may be able to take advantage of epidemiological linkages among groups of animals despite diverse geographical locations, to facilitate disease control taking into account possible disease risk due to the outbreak.

For the purpose of international trade, compartments shall be under the direct control and responsibility of the Veterinary Administration in the country.

Definitions
The following definitions have been adopted for the Terrestrial Code (the definitions in the Aquatic Code are very similar):

Zone/region: means a clearly defined part of a country containing an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade.

Compartment: means one or more establishments under a common biosecurity management system containing an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease or specific diseases for which required surveillance, control and biosecurity measures have been applied for the purpose of international trade.

Establishment: means the premises in which animals are kept.
Seven factors for evaluation and recognition of a compartment

Definition of the compartment
A compartment is an animal subpopulation with a defined status in respect of the conditions of interest, a geographical identity and integrity in maintenance of its membership and status. The compartment must be clearly defined, indicating the functional relationships of all its components and their contribution to an epidemiological boundary between the animals in the compartment and populations with a different health status. The definition of compartment may revolve around common animal ownership or management, membership in associations, industry improvement plans or breed registries with prescriptive biosecurity guidelines, or similar functional demarcations.

The compartment may also be defined by disease specific factors. For example, a cattle establishment may be defined as a BSE free compartment dependent primarily on careful historical documentation of feed sources, animal movements and identification. Alternatively, a swine confinement operation might be defined by the ability of its biosecurity plan to exclude infectious agents on a day to day basis. In the poultry industry, a compartment may be defined on the basis of a slaughter plant and all the establishments that supply birds to it as well as those establishments that are vertically integrated with the operation.

In general, a compartment is defined by the factors common to a population that provide distinct disease risk separation from animals or birds at higher risk for the disease(s) in question.

Epidemiologic separation of the compartment from potential sources of infection
Epidemiological parameters comprise a major portion of the defining criteria for a compartment. These factors relate to pathways of disease transmission, mitigations to prevent exposure, disease specific factors, and environmental factors that affect exposure and propagation of the disease agent.

Biosecurity in respect of health related issues
The biosecurity plan should address potential pathways for introduction and spread of infection into the compartment. In addition to detailing disease introduction pathways, a biosecurity plan should provide standard operating procedures that mitigate exposure from each pathway and describe a plan for the implementation and monitoring of compliance with the procedures. Finally, the plan should include means for education and training of workers to ensure that all persons involved in biosecurity are knowledgeable and informed.

Physical, spatial, or location factors that affect the status of biosecurity in the compartment
While a compartment is primarily based on biosecurity measures, a review of geographic factors is needed to ensure that the functional boundary provides...
adequate separation of the compartment from adjacent animal populations with a different health status. The following considerations are taken in conjunction with biosecurity measures and, in some instances, may alter the degree of confidence achieved by general biosecurity and surveillance measures.

- Disease or pest status in areas adjacent, or with unmanageable epidemiological links to the compartment.
- Location of nearest flocks or herds. Are the facilities within the compartment immediately adjacent to flocks or herds of with a different health status or is there a buffer area that would preclude direct contact or aerosol spread?
- Consideration of environmental spread of the disease agent. Are aerosols a factor in the transmission of the disease-causing agent? Is the climate such that agent survivability would be extremely brief or extremely prolonged?

In any case, sufficient evidence should be submitted to assess the efficacy of the biosecurity plan in accordance with the level of risk for each identified pathway. The biosecurity risk of all operations of the compartment should be periodically re-assessed through a formal process using a survey instrument designed to identify high risk aspects. Based on the outcome, concrete and documented mitigation steps should be taken to reduce areas of high risk for introducing the agent.

**Identification and registration**

A prerequisite to assess the integrity of the membership of the compartment is the existence of a valid traceability system. All animals within the compartment should be identified in such a way that their individual history can be audited. Depending on the system of production, identification may be done at the herd, flock, lot or individual animal level. All animal movements into and out of the compartment should be well documented, controlled, and supervised by the Veterinary Service (Table I).

**Documentation of factors critical to the definition of compartment**

Standard operating procedures should be in place to document all operations of the compartment. Documentation must provide clear evidence that the biosecurity, surveillance, traceability and management practices are adequate to meet the definition of the compartment. In addition to animal movement information, the necessary documentation should include herd or flock production records, feed sources, surveillance tests, birth and death records, visitor logbook, morbidity history, medications, vaccinations, biosecurity plans, documentation of training and any other criteria necessary for evaluation of disease exclusion.

The historical disease status of the compartment has to be documented, indicating the dates of last disease occurrence (if any), the number of outbreaks and the methods for disease control that were applied. Vaccination status for many diseases must be considered in regard to the interpretation of surveillance data. The type of vaccine and frequency of administration are needed in many cases to evaluate test results and to determine the risk of the disease in the population. Therefore, documentation of vaccine-related factors must be maintained for a period of time based on the disease, vaccine types and production cycles.
**Table I. General considerations of compartmental biosecurity: pathways of entry of disease agents and responsive mitigations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential pathways of entry</th>
<th>Examples of responsive mitigations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Endemic compartments</strong></td>
<td>No interactions with endemic compartments. Biosecurity practices protect from neighbouring herds/flocks (also see employee policy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild populations</strong></td>
<td>Animals in the free compartment should be housed in a way that provides adequate separation from wild populations of risk for disease transmission (e.g. wild boars, wild birds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employees</strong></td>
<td>− Policy prohibiting employees' contact with high risk animals. e.g. in the poultry industry a policy preventing employees from owning or handling birds off farm or attending avian shows or exhibitions; shower, dedicated clothing/footwear − Training in biosecurity and disease prevention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service sectors (e.g. catching/vaccination/cleaning crews/feed delivery/service personnel)</strong></td>
<td>− Require use of disposable or dedicated clothing/footwear − Require that they not have been on another farm same day − Truck/equipment cleaned and disinfected before coming on farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Congregation of sick/dead animals from multiple sources (e.g. rendering)</strong></td>
<td>Compost, incinerate, render, or bury dead animals e.g. for poultry, covered barrel at perimeter of property – dead birds placed in bags in barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vehicle traffic</strong></td>
<td>− Park away from animal housing, preferably outside farm perimeter − Only essential vehicles enter premises (e.g., feed truck) − Disinfection facilities at entrance – own vehicles as well as others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visitors</strong></td>
<td>− Prohibit visitors in animal area − Fences, signs, locked gates, or guards to discourage entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wild animals or pets</strong></td>
<td>− No attractants such as garbage; rodent control; fencing − House production animals indoors; no pets inside animal facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aerosol</strong></td>
<td>Prevention of possible aerosol-borne infection by distance or other specific measures such as air filtration systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feed</strong></td>
<td>Processing and handling including storage to avoid introduction of disease agent or contamination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vectors</strong></td>
<td>Vector proof housing. Verify the integrity of screens regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td>− Do not share equipment, including within the same company − Dedicated racks and flats (e.g., colour coded) – thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Downtime</strong></td>
<td>− Minimum downtime between flocks or litters? − Cleaning and disinfection; number of flocks before changing litter?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information contained in the records may vary according to the species and disease(s) under consideration. For example, in a disease such as BSE that is strictly transmitted by feed, with a long incubation period, complete records of all feed sources for several years would be essential to recognise the compartment. On the other hand, such historic feed records would be of little value for a highly contagious disease such as avian influenza.
Supervision and control of the compartment

The authority, organisation, and infrastructure of the Veterinary Services, including laboratories, must be clearly documented in accordance with the chapter on the evaluation of Veterinary Services of the OIE Terrestrial Code, to provide confidence in the integrity of the compartment.

Official oversight of biosecurity and surveillance is an essential component of compartmentalisation. The supervision of the factors critical to maintenance of a compartment status should be developed through cooperation of industry and government Veterinary Services. The final authority for the purposes of domestic and international trade lies within the Veterinary Services. All production within the compartment should be carried out according to a single standard of operation.

Industry’s responsibilities in most cases will include the application of biosecurity measures, quality assurance schemes, monitoring the efficacy of the measures, documenting corrective actions, conducting surveillance sampling, rapid reporting and maintenance of records in a readily accessible form. A Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) approach may be an appropriate tool with which to design and apply these measures.

The Veterinary Services with authoritative responsibility for international trade will provide movement certification, periodic inspections of facilities, biosecurity measures, records, surveillance, and sampling procedures. Veterinary Services should conduct surveillance and sampling and they should conduct or oversee laboratory diagnostic examinations. The extent of oversight and frequency of inspections must be adequate to provide reasonable confidence to trading partners that the measures defining the compartment are applied in a manner that meets the importing country’s appropriate level of protection.

Surveillance for the agent or disease

a) Surveillance should involve the collection and analysis of disease/infection data such that the Veterinary Services have confidence that animals in the establishment comply with the defined status of a compartment. A surveillance system that is able to ensure early detection in the event that the agent enters an establishment is essential. The surveillance system should comply with the General Guidelines for Surveillance in the Terrestrial Code and the specific guidelines for surveillance for the disease of interest.

b) Depending on the disease of interest, many different combinations of testing and surveillance may be applied to achieve the desired confidence in disease freedom. The surveillance methodology will usually follow OIE guidelines but may utilise a demonstrably equivalent method. Based on an assessment of risk factors, a country may choose to sample with greater intensity in areas of higher risk and less so in other areas that have a documented lower risk. In general, an appropriate combination of active (ongoing laboratory-based testing) and passive (voluntary intermittent reporting or testing) is necessary to achieve the surveillance goals described above. A system for reporting the results of surveillance testing must be documented and efficacious to inform veterinary officials and trading partners of positive tests, abnormal clinical signs and production observations that are included
in the surveillance strategy. Surveillance information must be reported immediately to the Veterinary Services by the compartment management and field veterinary officials responsible for surveillance and monitoring of the disease.

**Diagnostic capabilities**

Officially designated laboratory facilities complying with the OIE standards for quality assurance as defined by the OIE *Manual for diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for terrestrial and aquatic animals* should be available for sample testing. Any laboratory testing and procedures should be audited by the national authority. In particular, laboratories and personnel performing the tests should be trained and certified by the national reference laboratory as to competency. Periodically, the laboratories and personnel should complete a proficiency test to verify continuing competence. Reporting of test results should be transparent.

**Emergency response, control, and notification capability**

Rapid diagnosis, reporting, and notification of disease are critical to minimising risk from outbreaks. The structure of the compartment must be such that producers and their employees are aware of the notifiable diseases and procedures for reporting. Likewise, each laboratory that conducts surveillance testing must have systematic procedures in place for rapid reporting of disease results to authoritative government officials. The Veterinary Authority must then have standard operating procedures to inform the OIE and if necessary, other pertinent international bodies.

**Sequence of steps to be taken in defining a compartment**

There is no single sequence of steps which must be followed in defining a zone or a compartment. The steps that the Veterinary Administration of importing and exporting countries choose and implement will generally depend on the circumstances existing within a country and at its borders. The recommended steps are:

- based on discussions with the relevant enterprise/industry, the exporting country identifies within its territory one or more establishments or other premises owned by an enterprise(s) which operates under a common biosecurity management system, and which it considers contains an animal subpopulation with a distinct health status with respect to a specific disease/specific diseases;
- the exporting country assesses through a formal process compliance with the seven factors described above;
- the exporting country identifies such an enterprise to be a free compartment, in accordance with the measures stipulated in the Terrestrial or Aquatic Code;
- the exporting country provides the information above to the importing country, and proposes that such an enterprise be treated as an epidemiologically separated compartment for international trade purposes;
- the importing country determines whether it may accept such an enterprise as a compartment for the importation of animals and animal products, taking into account:
  - an evaluation of the exporting country’s Veterinary Services or other Competent Authorities, according to the OIE Codes;
  - its own animal health situation with respect to the disease(s) concerned; and
-- other relevant OIE standards;

- the importing country notifies the exporting country of its determination and the underlying reasons, within a reasonable period of time (maximum of 60 days), being either:
  - recognition of the compartment, in which case, the importing country and the exporting country may enter into a formal agreement defining the compartment;
  - request for further information; or
  - rejection of such an enterprise as a compartment for international trade purposes.

Official recognition of animal health status

The OIE has a mandate to examine upon request from a Member Country its claims for a particular status with regard to four of the OIE listed diseases: foot and mouth disease (FMD), rinderpest, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). The OIE does not routinely classify its Member Countries with respect to their animal health status for other listed diseases.

The procedure requires that the Member Country provide evidence that it complies with all the relevant provisions of the Terrestrial Code and Manual with respect to the disease for which free status is being sought, either for the whole country, or for a zone or compartment within the country. While at present free status recognition is confined to countries and zones, as the use of the concept of compartmentalisation broadens within the Terrestrial and Aquatic Codes, official recognition of claims for free status of compartments will follow.

As the procedure concludes with an official recognition by the OIE of the status of the Member Country for that disease (through a formal resolution of the OIE International Committee), other OIE Member Countries have an obligation to take that recognition into account when developing import health measures for commodities from that Member Country.

Conclusion

OIE Member Countries have continuously striven to facilitate risk-based trade in the face of the challenges represented by disease prevalence in the livestock and poultry populations involved. In recent years, regionalisation/zoning was introduced as a means for trading from a sub-national area in an otherwise infected country. This requires that the Veterinary Services exert control at the region/zone level equivalent or superior to that at the national level.

Compartmentalisation is a tool that may also be applied to facilitate trade in animals and their products. Fundamental to its application is the Veterinary Services’ control over the compartment and the free exchange of information necessary to convince importing countries that the risk of disease introduction from trade is minimised. Therefore, the procedures for establishing trade based upon the compartmentalisation concept should be similar to those practiced for regionalisation/zoning.
All disease control approaches require the combined contributions of Veterinary Services and individual producers. *Compartmentalisation* requires a higher relative investment of resources per unit of animal production by the producers and the Veterinary Services than zoning or national disease control programs. A *compartment* is analogous to the initial phase in traditional national disease control programmes (tuberculosis, brucellosis, pseudorabies) in which producers, under the Veterinary Service supervision, decided for trade purposes to establish individual herd status superior to that to the general herd population.

The preceding guidelines provide a basis for establishing, evaluating and exchanging information on compartmentalised animal populations in the interest of international trade. As in the case of similar national or zoned/regionalised applications, the related trade decisions are ultimately determined by the importing country’s assessment; also taking into account any official recognition by the OIE, of whether its acceptable level of risk can be met during the commercial transaction.

In the global context of animal production in both the industrialised and developing world, this *Review* describes the various hazards that can occur during the production stage, including problems associated with fish and shellfish farming. It also deals with responses to food safety challenges, including policy development and practical implementation of on-farm food safety measures, the link between food safety and market access, the responsibilities of the Veterinary Services and public investment in strengthening these and other food safety services. In addition, the implementation of traceability systems and the issue of antimicrobial resistance and the prudent use of antibiotics are discussed. The last section deals with the global perspectives – international standard-setting organisations and stakeholders.
meetings and visits
From December 2005 to March 2006

December 2005 (cont.)

Regional Technical Committee (Maghreb component) of France’s Priority Solidarity Fund (FSP) no. 2003-067 on support for the harmonisation and regionalisation of epidemiological networks for animal disease surveillance
Dr C. Planté, Project Officer, OIE Regional Representation for Africa, represented the OIE at the FSP Regional Technical Committee (Maghreb component) no. 2003-067 support for the harmonisation and regionalisation of epidemiological networks for animal disease surveillance, held in Montpellier, France, from 19 to 20 December 2005.

Mission to Ukraine to assess the avian influenza situation and to advise on the national measures to be taken to eradicate the disease
Dr A. Cristalli and Dr S. Marangon, OIE/FAO and National Reference Laboratory for Newcastle Disease and Avian Influenza Virology Department Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie, Padua, Italy, represented the OIE in a Mission held in Ukraine, 21-22 December 2005 to assess the avian influenza situation and to advise on the national measures to be taken to eradicate the disease.

January 2006

32nd Annual Conference of the International Embryo Transfer Society
Dr W. Droppers, Project Officer reporting to the Director General of the OIE, represented the OIE at the 32nd Annual Conference of the International Embryo Transfer Society, held in Orlando, United States of America, from 7 to 9 January 2006.

Meeting with Mr Kyprianou, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, and participation in a lunch organised by members of DG SANCO, the European Council, the European Parliament and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
On 11 January 2006, in Brussels, Belgium, Dr B. Vallat, Director General of the OIE, met Mr Kyprianou, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, and took part in the lunch held jointly by DG SANCO, the Secretariat of the European Council (outgoing British and incoming Austrian Presidencies) and Mrs Roth-Behrendt, Vice-President of the European Parliament and member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Extraordinary avian flu meeting organised by DG SANCO/Public Health and Risk Assessment
On 12 January 2006, in Luxembourg, Dr J.-L. Angot, Deputy Director General for Administration, Finance and Human Resources, represented the OIE at the extraordinary avian flu meeting organised by DG SANCO/Public Health and Risk Assessment.

FAO/EC/OIE mission on avian influenza epidemic in Turkey
Dr Y. Leforban, OIE Expert, represented the OIE at the FAO/EC/OIE mission on avian influenza epidemic, held in Ankara, Turkey, from 13 to 18 January 2006.
IPPC Working Group on Electronic Certification
Dr F. Berlingieri, Deputy Head, OIE International Trade Department, represented the OIE at the IPPC Working Group on Electronic Certification, held in Wageningen, Netherlands, from 16 to 18 January 2006.

International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza
Dr B. Vallat, Director General of the OIE, Dr D. Sibartie, Head of the Regional Activities Department, Dr C. Bruschke, Project Officer, Dr T. Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, Dr N.T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, Dr P. Fernandez, President of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, Dr G. Murray, President of the OIE Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, and Dr R.S. Thwala, Vice-President of the OIE Regional Commission for Africa, took part in the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza, held in Beijing, People’s Republic of China, from 17 to 18 January 2006.

Workshop to launch TCP/RAF/3016 ‘Emergency Assistance for Early Detection and Prevention of Avian Influenza in West and Central Africa’
Dr A.B. Niang, President of the OIE, Dr A.S. Sidibé, OIE Regional Representative for Africa, and Dr C. Planté, Project Officer, OIE Regional Representation for Africa, represented the OIE at the workshop to launch TCP/RAF/3016 ‘Emergency Assistance for Early detection and Prevention of Avian Influenza in West and Central Africa’, held in Bamako, Mali, from 23 to 26 January 2006.

IPPC Working Group on Electronic Certification
Dr B. Vallat, Deputy Head, OIE International Trade Department, represented the OIE at the IPPC Working Group on Electronic Certification, held in Wageningen, Netherlands, from 16 to 18 January 2006.

Seminar on the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS)
Dr B. Vallat, Director General of the OIE, Dr J. Pinto, Deputy Head, Animal Health Information Department, and Dr L.O. Barcos, Regional Representative for the Americas, represented the OIE at a Seminar on the World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS), held in Santiago, Chile, from 25 to 28 January 2006.

Visit of David Nabarro to the Netherlands
Dr C. Bruschke, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE during the visit of David Nabarro to The Netherlands, held in The Hague, Netherlands, 31 January to 1 February 2006.

TCP/RAF/3006 ‘Emergency Assistance for Early Detection and Prevention of Avian Influenza in the North African Region’
Dr C. Planté, Project Officer, OIE Regional Representation for Africa, and Dr H. Aidaros, OIE expert, represented the OIE at TCP/RAF/3006 ‘Emergency Assistance for Early Detection and Prevention of Avian Influenza in the North African Region’, held in Cairo, Egypt, from 1 to 2 February 2006.

Working Group Meeting of the Standards Trade Development Facility
Dr D. Sibartie, Head, OIE Regional Activities Department, represented the OIE at the Working Group Meeting of the Standards Trade Development Facility, held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 3 February 2006.

February 2006
WTO SPS Committee (34th meeting) and associated meetings
Dr D. Wilson, Head, OIE International Trade Department, represented the OIE at the WTO SPS Committee (34th meeting) and associated meetings, held in Geneva, Switzerland, 1-2 February 2006.
Meeting of the National Emergency Headquarters to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria
Professor N.T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, represented the OIE at the meeting of the National Emergency Headquarters to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 8 February 2006.

Fourth CAPSERSA Steering Committee Meeting
Dr A. Schudel, Head, Scientific and Technical Department, represented the OIE at the Fourth CAPSERSA Steering Committee Meeting, held in Bern, Switzerland, on 9 February 2006.

Dr B. Vallat, Director General, Dr D. Sibartie, Head of the Regional Activities Department, Dr A. Thiermann, Adviser to the Director General, Mrs H. Gevers, Project Officer, Regional Activities Department, Mrs N. Monsalve, Secretary of the Regional Activities Department, Mr S. Berlaud, Regional Activities Department, Dr Ph. Blanc, Project Officer, Dr S. Sidibé, Regional Representative for Africa, Dr C. Planté, Technical Assistant to the OIE Regional Representative for Africa, and Dr B. Mtei, Coordinator of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Africa in Gaborone, Botswana, participated in an OIE/AU-IBAR/FAO Seminar on Animal Health Policies, Evaluation of Veterinary Services and the Role of Farmers in the Surveillance of Animal Diseases, held in N’Djamena, Chad, from 13 to 15 February 2006. The seminar discussed the use of the ‘Performance, vision and Strategy’ (PVS) tool for the evaluation of Veterinary Services in Africa and the support to African countries in drawing up national plans for the prevention and control of avian influenza.

Meeting with representatives of the US Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria
Professor N.T. Belev, OIE Regional Representative for Eastern Europe and President of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, represented the OIE at the meeting with representatives of the US Embassy, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 15 February 2006.

Launching of the sub-regional initiative of avian influenza control
Dr B. Vallat, Director General of the OIE, Dr A.B. Niang, President of the OIE, and Dr A.S. Sidibé, OIE Regional Representative for Africa, participated in a meeting organised for the launching of the sub-regional initiative of avian influenza control by the President of the Republic of Senegal. This meeting was held in Dakar, Senegal, on 21 and 22 February 2006.

SPC Workshop to finalize draft Pacific Regional Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Project (PRIPPP)
Dr Y. Oketani, Deputy Regional Representative of the OIE for Asia, the Far East and Oceania, represented the OIE at SPC Workshop to finalize draft Pacific Regional Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Project (PRIPPP), held in Nadi, Fiji Islands, 23-24 February 2006.
March 2006

**Official visit to Australia**
Dr B. Vallat, Director General of the OIE, made an official visit to Canberra, Australia, from 4 to 7 March 2006.

**Meeting to discuss all the elements which can contribute to an optimal questionnaire for the technical item on ‘Live animals and food smuggling: current practices and prevention and repression tools’**
On 7 March 2006, in London, United Kingdom, Dr W. Droppers, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE at a meeting to discuss all the elements which can contribute to an optimal questionnaire for the technical item on ‘Live animals and food smuggling: current practices and prevention and repression tools’ for the next meeting of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe to be held in September 2006.

**High Level Policy Meeting with US and EU – Emergency Response Avian Influenza**
Dr C. Bruschke, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE at the High Level Policy Meeting with US and EU - Emergency Response Avian Influenza, held in FAO, Rome, Italy, 7-8 March 2006.

**Coordination of GF-TADs activities concerning Avian Influenza (AI) prevention, control and/or eradication in the Americas**
Dr L.O. Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, represented the OIE at the Coordination of GF-TADs activities concerning avian influenza prevention, control and/or eradication in the Americas, held in Washington, DC, United States of America, 7-8 March 2006.

**Coordination meeting**
on the implementation of FMD zoning in the Upper Mekong part of Yunan Province, People’s Republic of China
Dr R. Abila, Regional Coordinator for SEAFMD, represented the OIE at the Coordination meeting on the implementation of FMD zoning in the Upper Mekong part of Yunan Province, People’s Republic of China, held in Kunming, People’s Republic of China, from 7 to 9 March 2006.

**LIII Ordinary Meeting of the H. CIRSA**
Dr L.O. Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, represented the OIE at the LIII Ordinary Meeting of the H. CIRSA, held in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, on 9 March 2006.
Meeting with the Minister of Livestock Development of Panama and the local Representative of the OIRSA
Dr L.O. Barcos, OIE Regional Representative for the Americas, represented the OIE at a meeting with Mr. Guillermo Salazar, Minister of Livestock Development of Panama, and Dr Abelardo de Gracia, local Representative of the OIRSA, in Panama, from 9 to 11 March 2006.

Orientation on the activities of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Africa
Dr B. Mtei, Coordinator of the OIE Sub-Regional Representation for Africa in Gaborone, Botswana, visited the OIE Headquarters from 13 to 19 March 2006 for discussions on the orientation on the activities of the Sub-Regional Representation.

European Commission meeting to create a stock of avian influenza vaccines
Dr Ph. Blanc, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE at a European Commission meeting held in Brussels, Belgium, on 15 March 2006 on procedures for using part of the emergency fund for rinderpest outbreaks to create a stock of avian influenza vaccines.

Meeting of the European Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Producers (AEFRV)
Dr G. Brückner, Head, OIE Scientific and Technical Department, represented the OIE at a meeting of the European Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Producers (AEFRV), held in Brussels, Belgium, on 16 March 2006.

General overview of common activities of OIE and IFAH and future improvement
Dr B. Vallat, General Director of the OIE, Dr G. Brückner, Head of Scientific and Technical Department, Dr E. Erlacher-Vindel, Deputy Head of Scientific and Technical Department, Dr P. Jones, Executive Director of IFAH, and Dr P. Dehaumont, OIE Collaborating Centre for Veterinary Medicinal Products, participated in the General overview of common activities of OIE and IFAH and future improvement, held at the OIE headquarters on 17 March 2006.

International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID) 2006, and the OIE/CDC International Symposium on Emerging Zoonoses
Dr B. Vallat, General Director of the OIE, Dr A. Schudel, Head, OIE Scientific and Technical Department, Dr A. Thiermann, Adviser to the Director General and Dr K. Ben Jebara, Head of Animal Health Information Department, represented the OIE at the International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID) 2006, and the OIE/CDC International Symposium on Emerging Zoonoses, held in Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America, from 20 to 24 March 2006.

EFSA Task Force on Zoonoses
Dr D. Chaisemartin, Head of the OIE Administration and Management Systems Department, represented the OIE at the meeting of the EFSA Task Force on Zoonoses, held in Parma, Italy, from 20 to 21 March 2006.

5th European conference on travel medicine and global health
Dr C. Bruschke, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE at the 5th European conference on travel medicine and global health, held in Venice, Italy, on 23 March 2006.
Seminar on training of veterinary services, public awareness campaign and serological survey in the Upper Mekong Zone
Dr S. Forman, Technical Adviser SEAFMD, represented the OIE at the seminar on training of veterinary services, public awareness campaign and serological survey in the Upper Mekong Zone, held in Oudomxay, Laos, from 27 to 30 March 2006.

7th session of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP)
Dr S. MacDiarmid, Secretary General of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission, represented the OIE at the 7th session of the Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP), held in Queenstown, New Zealand, from 27 March to 1 April 2006.

International Egg Commission
Dr C. Bruschke, OIE Project Officer, represented the OIE at the International Egg Commission, held in London, United Kingdom, on 28 March 2006.

Avian influenza meeting (follow-up to the Beijing conference to prepare the Vienna conference), World Bank, Washington DC
Dr J.-L. Angot, Deputy Director General of the OIE for Administration, Finance and Human Resources, and Dr Ph. Blanc, Coordinator of the World Animal Health and Welfare Fund, represented the OIE at the avian influenza meeting (follow-up to the Beijing conference to prepare the Vienna conference), held by the World Bank in Washington DC, United States of America, on 28 March 2006.

World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) training workshop for the Maghreb countries
Dr K. Ben Jebara, Head of the OIE Animal Health Information Department, and Dr C. Planté, Project Officer, OIE Regional Representation for Africa, organised the WAHIS training workshop for the Maghreb countries, held in Rabat, Morocco, from 28 to 30 March 2006. This workshop being in French, only Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia attended. Libya will be invited later on to another workshop that will be held in English.

Interagency Workshop on MZCP Strengthening
Dr G. Yehia, OIE Regional Representative for the Middle East, represented the OIE at the Interagency Workshop on MZCP Strengthening, held in Athens, Greece, 29-30 March 2006.

OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund Project on HPAI Control in Southeast Asia
Dr T. Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, represented the OIE at the OIE/Japan Special Trust Fund Project on HPAI Control in Southeast Asia, held in Bangkok, Thailand, 30-31 March 2006 and met the Director General of the Department of Livestock Development of Thailand and the Assistant Director General of FAO and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific.
Pedagogic kit on avian influenza

The occurrence of avian influenza in Africa and its spread, particularly in Western and Central Africa, has led the Inter-State University of Veterinary Sciences and Medicine of Dakar (EISMV), an OIE Collaborating Centre, to develop a pedagogic kit. The aim of this kit is to assist countries of the region to raise awareness of all concerned in the prevention and control of the disease particularly as regards early detection and rapid response in case of outbreaks.

This educational kit contains tools that can be used by all stakeholders, such as officials of Veterinary Services, technical personnel of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), persons in charge of animal production and rural radio announcers, to conduct awareness programmes primarily aimed at rural populations. It also includes an illustrated book on awareness, a guide on the organisation of meetings, sketches recorded in an audio and video format in French and various Western and Central African languages, as well as a poster, monograph and diaporama that can be adapted to local languages.

The kit is available on order from the EISMV:

EISMV
BP 5077
Senegal
Tel.: +221 865 10 08
Fax: +221 825 42 83.
Website: www.refer.sn/eismv

Regional Activities Department meetings

OIE/AU-IBAR/FAO Regional seminar on animal health policies, evaluation of Veterinary Services and the role of livestock farmers in the surveillance of animal diseases, from 13 to 15 February 2006, N’Djamena, Chad

Organised with the support of the government of Chad, this seminar gathered over 80 participants representing 13 countries from all regions of Africa as well as high level representatives from the three organisations involved.

During this event, three recommendations concerning respectively the delivery of animal health and public health services, the evaluation of Veterinary Services (PVS), and the preparation of emergency plans for avian influenza were unanimously approved.

(for more details, please see Bulletin p. 26)

Conference on highly pathogenic avian influenza in Europe, OIE Headquarters, 27 and 28 February 2006:

Organised as a matter of emergency at the request of Germany and Russia, this conference gathered participants from 50 European or neighbouring countries as well as international organisations.

The experts met in order to establish a common approach for the control of the disease and also evoked the role of migrating birds in the spread of the virus and the important impact it could have in the spring migrations.

(for more details, please see Bulletin p. 25)
1st Meeting of the FAO/OIE GF-TADs Steering Committee for the Middle East, Beirut (Lebanon), 6 and 7 April 2006
This meeting held in Beirut with representatives from the Middle East, the OIE and the FAO, led to the adoption of a set of recommendations on the harmonisation of animal health activities within the framework of the GF-TADs activities.

Workshop on avian influenza preparedness in the Middle East, Beirut (Lebanon), from 18 to 21 April 2006
Held in Beirut, this seminar gathered over 50 participants from 10 Middle-Eastern OIE Member Countries. It led to recommendations regarding the improvement of Veterinary Services, and the support of Member Countries to the OIE initiative in the elaboration of the ‘Performance, Vision and Strategy’ tool (PVS) on the evaluation of Veterinary Services.

International trade department meetings

25-27 January 2006, ad hoc group to review the chapter of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE)
The ad hoc group met at the OIE Headquarters to review recent scientific findings regarding BSE and made recommendations to reflect such findings in the BSE chapter. The ad hoc group also discussed the creation of a supporting document aimed at providing justification for the recommendations in the Code chapter. The report of this meeting is appended to the March report of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.

30 January-1 February 2006, Animal Production Food Safety Working Group
The Working Group met to address the food safety issues of the OIE: cooperation between the OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC); the role of the OIE in field of biotechnology and its relations with the CAC; strengthening public health and animal health through responsible use of reliable, safe and effective veterinary drugs; the control of hazards of public health and animal health importance through ante- and post-mortem meat inspection; the role and functionality of Veterinary Services; the OIE good farming practices; the ongoing work on animal identification and traceability; the inclusion of public health aspects on the bovine brucellosis revised Chapter; the possible future OIE standards on animal feeding; the revision of OIE model certificates; the update of the OIE standards on salmonellosis and the revision of its modus operandi.

The report of this meeting is appended to the March report of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.

13-15 February 2006, second Meeting of the OIE Ad Hoc Group on Identification and Traceability of Live Animals
Addressing Member Countries’ comments and the indications received by the Animal Production Food Safety Working Group, the ad hoc group revised the draft definitions and principles of animal identification and traceability. Following its terms of reference, the ad hoc group drafted guidelines for animal identification and traceability to provide an instrument for Member Countries to improve animal health and public health, and to contribute to better management of health crises at national and international levels.

The full report is appended to the March report of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.
28 February-2 March 2006, *ad hoc* Group on equine influenza (EI)

The newly established *ad hoc* group met for the first time at the OIE Headquarters. The *ad hoc* group drafted a revised chapter for the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, taking into account various issues including the fact that almost all movement of horses occurs between countries of undetermined EI status as well as the unique characteristics of horses moved internationally for breeding or competition purposes. The report of this meeting is appended to the March report of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.

6-10 March 2006, *Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission*

The Commission met to address Member Countries’ comments to the proposals made at its September 2005 meeting, as well as work done by various OIE *ad hoc* groups (on bovine spongiform encephalopathy [BSE], equine influenza, and animal identification and traceability) and the Animal Production Food Safety Working Group. Major issues being presented for adoption at the May 2006 General Session of the OIE International Committee included: the evaluation of Veterinary Services, zoning and compartmentalisation, criteria for listing diseases for reporting purposes, foot and mouth disease, bluetongue, BSE (disease chapter and surveillance appendix), classical swine fever, avian influenza (disease chapter, surveillance appendix and newly developed guidelines for virus inactivation), animal identification and traceability, and equine diseases. The full report is available on the OIE website (http://www.oie.int).

13-17 March 2006, *Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission*

The Commission met to address Member Countries’ comments and the work done by the relevant OIE *ad hoc* groups. The Commission proposed updated disease chapters to the May 2006 General Session of the International Committee for the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* with a view to maximising harmonisation. The OIE listed diseases were also discussed and an updated version is proposed to OIE Member Countries. Other topic of discussion were the OIE *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*, OIE reference laboratories, the new OIE disease notification system and the OIE global conference on aquatic animal health to be held in October 2006 in Norway.

The full report is available on the OIE web site (http://www.oie.int/aac/eng/en_fdc.htm).

### Scientific and Technical Department meetings

**Between January and March 2006**

The *Ad hoc* Groups on foot and mouth disease (FMD), bovine spongiform encephalopathy, epidemiology, antimicrobial resistance, vaccine strategies on avian influenza, non-structural protein tests for foot and mouth disease, the Working Group on Wildlife Diseases met at the OIE Headquarters under the responsibility of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (SCAD). During this period the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases had two meetings while there was one meeting of the Biological Standard Commission.

The main topics discussed during these meetings were:

**Ad hoc Group on vaccination strategies for avian influenza**

The evaluation of vaccination strategies for avian influenza, the types of vaccines in use and to develop general guidelines for Member Countries on the implementation of vaccination strategies.

**Ad hoc Group on Epidemiology**

This *Ad hoc* Group had two meetings during this period to review and modify the questionnaires for country status of foot and mouth disease, rinderpest and contagious bovine pleuropneumonia.
Ad hoc Group for the evaluation of country status for foot and mouth disease

- Reviewed the dossiers for the application of two Member Countries for country status recognition.
- Reviewed the requirements and decision-making process for sequential zoning for disease free zones within a country.

Ad hoc Group on the evaluation of non-structural protein (NSP) tests for foot and mouth disease diagnosis

- Reviewed the status of the NSP tests for sheep and pigs.
- Reviewed the results obtained in comparative studies carried out by concerted actions.
- Reviewed validation data in sheep and pigs according to the OIE validation criteria.

Working Group on Wildlife Diseases

This permanent OIE Working Group met from 20 to 23 February 2006 at the OIE Headquarters and:
- Reviewed the global disease situation in wildlife in 2005.
- Discussed proposals to improve the OIE networking system to improve the reporting on wildlife diseases.
- Reviewed the emerging wildlife related zoonoses and diseases of public health concern.
- Held a special meeting with invited experts on the role of wildlife in the epidemiology of avian influenza.

Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases

The Scientific Commission had two meetings in this period, from 16 to 20 January and again from 8 to 9 March 2006. During the meeting in January 2006, the Commission:
- Reviewed and endorsed the reports of the Ad hoc groups under the responsibility of the Commission.
- Reviewed issues referred to the Commission by the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.
- Approved the draft text on Compartementalisation for publication in the Bulletin.
- Reviewed the recommendations of the Ad hoc Groups on FMD, Rinderpest, CBPP and BSE for the allocation of country status for these diseases.
- Once again reviewed the recommendations of the Ad hoc Group on the Evaluation of country status for BSE in consultation with members of the Ad hoc Group and an invited expert from an OIE Collaborative Centre in Epidemiology.
- Reviewed and approved the draft Appendix for the Disposal of Dead Animals for adoption by the International Committee of the OIE.
- Reviewed the implications of sequential zoning for foot and mouth disease and the procedures to expedite the regaining of country status after an outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

OIE Ad hoc Group on Emerging Zoonosis

The ad hoc Group met at the Marriott Marquis, Atlanta (USA) from 21 to 22 March 2006. Main issues discussed were:
- Merits and potential for further collaborations between OIE and CDC.
- Critical issues related to avian influenza and the ad hoc group.
- Review of the National Academy of Sciences study and recommendations pertaining to veterinary public health.
- Guidelines and assessment of veterinary services with regard to infrastructure and public health capacity of OIE member countries.
- Linkage of public health with academic veterinary medicine – models and best practices; include briefing on CDC Veterinary Student Symposium as international model.
- Progress and advances of international organizations in public health – short summaries by OIE, FAO and WHO.

OFFLU Steering Committee

The OFFLU Steering Committee met from 13 March 2006 at OIE to discuss especially the following:
- Global situation from FAO and OIE perspectives and the impact of OFFLU.
- Liaison with the WHO network.
- Funding of the OFFLU secretariat.
- Evaluation of terms of reference for steering committee, scientific committee and scientific collaborators.
- Regional balance in scientific committee and scientific collaborators.
OIE news

- Communication with scientific collaborators
- Sequence data and exchange of virus isolates
- Coordination and prioritisation of mission requests by OFFLU
- Liaison with the OFFLU Scientific Committee

**The Biological Standards Commission**
The Commission met at the OIE Headquarters from 25 to 27 January 2006. The main topics discussed were:
- Reviewed and accepted new applications for OIE Collaborating Centre and Reference Laboratory status and a number changes in the designated disease experts
- Reviewed the annual reports of activities of this network of expertise
- Approved the preliminary programme and topics for the First International Conference for OIE Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres will be held from 3 to 5 December 2006 in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brazil
- Reviewed the list of prescribed and alternative tests and will propose some changes for adoption by the International Committee in May 2006
- Revised drafts of the Chapters for the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals* and identified chapters for urgent revision, specifically the chapters on Principles of validation of diagnostic assays for infectious diseases; Principles of veterinary vaccine production; and Foot and mouth disease.
- The Commission noted the reports of the ad hoc Groups on NSP tests, antimicrobial resistance and BSE tests.

**Ad hoc Group on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Tests**
- Reviewed test approval measures in place in relevant member Countries and to compare these processes to the OIE Template for test validation.
- Considered OIE test validation procedures for tests that are currently approved in the listed countries and tests that are submitted without having obtained approval in countries where the approval process is considered to be compatible with that agreed for the OIE.
- Considered the need of BSE test validation procedures to be specific for surveillance, confirmation and the status of confirmatory tests

**Ad hoc Group on Antimicrobial Resistance**
- Reviewed of data to establish a list of critically important antimicrobials for veterinary medicine to be proposed to the OIE International Committee during the 74th General Session in May 2006.
Meeting on avian influenza in Europe

OIE Headquarters, Paris, 27-28 February 2006

A meeting on highly pathogenic avian influenza in Europe was held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris on 27 and 28 February 2006. It was organised by the OIE Central Bureau in collaboration with the OIE Regional Commission for Europe and was attended by the Chief Veterinary Officers of approximately 50 countries of the European Region as well as of some neighbouring countries. The objectives of the meeting were to assess the current situation of the spread of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza virus across the European Region and to define a common approach to the control of the disease.

The participants in the meeting agreed that all countries world-wide need to control the virus, as only one defaulting country can seriously endanger the rest of the planet.

The meeting also underlined that efficacy of Veterinary Services is particularly linked to compliance with OIE standards which can be determined by evaluations carried out on a voluntary basis under the auspices of the OIE.

The use of vaccination for the control of the disease was considered as an option in specific cases. Only vaccines complying with OIE standards should be used accompanied by an effective monitoring programme. Furthermore, the need for an appropriate strategic stock of vaccines directed against the H5N1 strain accompanied by relevant vaccination materials was pointed out.

The meeting concluded with a strong appeal to the European Commission and to international donors to support eastern European laboratories to accelerate testing procedures needed for the identification of avian influenza in OIE/AU-IBAR/FAO Seminar on animal health policies, evaluation of Veterinary Services and the role of livestock breeders in the surveillance of animal diseases.

OIE/AU-IBAR/FAO Seminar on animal health policies, evaluation of Veterinary Services and the role of livestock breeders in the surveillance of animal diseases

N’Djamena, Chad, 13-15 February 2006

The joint OIE/AU-IBAR/FAO seminar on animal health policies, evaluation of Veterinary Services and the role of livestock breeders in the surveillance of animal diseases was held in N’Djamena, Chad, from 13 to 15 February 2006.
OIE Delegates or their representatives from 13 Member Countries, representatives of livestock associations, private veterinarians and Presidents of Veterinary Statutory Bodies in Africa attended the seminar. Representatives of sub-regional organisations, such as the CEBEVIRHA, as well as donors involved in livestock development in Africa, such as the European Union and France, also participated in the seminar.

During the inaugural address, the OIE Director General, Dr Bernard Vallat, underlined that the avian influenza crisis, which has already reached Africa, has aroused considerable interest to improve the efficacy of Veterinary Services of the continent in order to face this new challenge. Veterinary Services, particularly in Africa, need to be strengthened. To this end, the OIE has developed a tool for the evaluation of Veterinary Services in order to identify gaps and weaknesses in their compliance with international standards. This will enable them to seek resources both at national and international level.

The Minister for Livestock of the Republic of Chad, Mr Mahamat Allamine Bourma Tréyé, urged participants to cooperate with the international community to contain animal diseases including zoonoses, responsible for enormous economic and social losses. With regard to the introduction of avian influenza in Africa, the Minister stressed: ‘In African countries, where the main resources are men and animals, it is a huge catastrophe. I call upon all participants to seriously meditate on this problem and I also request the representatives of international organisations and representatives of all countries present in this hall to support the efforts of Africa, particularly the Republic of Chad, which is in the front line’.

The seminar finally unanimously adopted three recommendations regarding the main topics of the seminar, including one entirely dedicated to avian influenza.
Seminars on ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’ in 2006

Organised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the European Union and TAIEX

In compliance with the implementation of the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan, another series of seminars on ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’ will be organised in 2006 as part of the OIE Programme for Europe 2005-2008. These follow on the three seminars organised in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey during the second half of 2005.

The aim of these seminars is to provide information on international codes, standards and guidelines of the OIE, EC veterinary legislation, food safety, animal welfare and public health sector.

The dates for the seminars (8) scheduled for 2006 are as follows: Macedonia on 4 and 5 April, Albania on 6 and 7 April, Serbia and Montenegro on 4 and 5 May, Croatia on 27 and 28 June, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 29 and 30 June, Georgia on 2 and 3 October, Armenia on 4 and 5 October, and Azerbaijan on 6 and 7 October.

The programme for each seminar includes the following topics: objectives and structure of the OIE, the 4th OIE Strategic Plan 2006-2010; structure of the European Union (EU) and DG SANCO and collaboration EU/OIE; presentation of the national Veterinary Services (NVS) of the host country; Veterinary Framework Act as a means to implement and enforce the EU Community Aquis; new OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS); OIE standards on quality and evaluation of the NVS; use of new OIE evaluation tools, such as PVS (Performance, Vision and Strategy); veterinary

12th Meeting of the OIE Sub-Commission for foot and mouth disease in South East Asia

The 12th annual meeting of the South-East Asia Foot and Mouth Disease (SEAFMD) Programme was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 25 February to 3 March 2006 to review progress achieved on the harmonisation of control measures against FMD in South East Asia.

The meeting noted the significant progress achieved in the control of FMD in the region. The number of cases of FMD is on the decrease and the process to progressively declare zones of the region free from FMD is well on the march. The presence of the Asia 1 strain of FMD in the region is of concern and is being closely studied.

The last day of the meeting was devoted to highly pathogenic avian influenza and provided an opportunity for countries in the region to present country reports and to study the possibility of harmonising control measures at regional level. A special recommendation on avian influenza was adopted, which stressed the importance of the evaluation of Veterinary Services using the Performance, Vision and strategy (PVS) tool developed by the OIE in collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA). This evaluation will help to identify gaps and deficiencies that can be remedied through assistance to be provided nationally or by external donors.

In compliance with the implementation of the Fourth OIE Strategic Plan, another series of seminars on ‘Dialogue and Common Activities between the OIE Member Countries of the European Union and the other OIE Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe’ will be organised in 2006 as part of the OIE Programme for Europe 2005-2008. These follow on the three seminars organised in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey during the second half of 2005.

The aim of these seminars is to provide information on international codes, standards and guidelines of the OIE, EC veterinary legislation, food safety, animal welfare and public health sector.

The dates for the seminars (8) scheduled for 2006 are as follows: Macedonia on 4 and 5 April, Albania on 6 and 7 April, Serbia and Montenegro on 4 and 5 May, Croatia on 27 and 28 June, Bosnia and Herzegovina on 29 and 30 June, Georgia on 2 and 3 October, Armenia on 4 and 5 October, and Azerbaijan on 6 and 7 October.

The programme for each seminar includes the following topics: objectives and structure of the OIE, the 4th OIE Strategic Plan 2006-2010; structure of the European Union (EU) and DG SANCO and collaboration EU/OIE; presentation of the national Veterinary Services (NVS) of the host country; Veterinary Framework Act as a means to implement and enforce the EU Community Aquis; new OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS); OIE standards on quality and evaluation of the NVS; use of new OIE evaluation tools, such as PVS (Performance, Vision and Strategy); veterinary
education in the EU, continuous professional development (CPD); animal welfare policies of the EU and the OIE; certification of animals and animal products; animal health controls in the EU, disease eradication and compensation schemes, destruction of infected and in contact animals; import and export policies, regulations and procedures on movement of live animals and animal products among Member Countries of the European Union and other Member Countries of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe; policies of the EU and OIE on veterinary public health, EU Mechanisms to support non EU Member Countries in the field of animal health, animal welfare and food safety; relations and communication between the NVS and the Government, Parliament and mass media.

official acts

Appointment of permanent Delegates

1 February 2006
Germany
Professor Dr Werner Zwingmann
Director, Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection

2 February 2006
Turkey
Dr Hüseyin Sungur
Director General, General Directorate of Protection and Control, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

14 March 2006
Pakistan
Dr Muhammad Afzal
Animal Health Commissioner, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock

16 March 2006
United Arab Emirates
Eng. Ahmed Kulaib Al Tenaiji
Director of Animal Wealth Department, Ministry of Environment and Water

22 March 2006
Greece
Dr Spiros Doudounakis
Head of Unit, Infectious Diseases Department, Ministry of Rural development and Food

28 March 2006
Chad
Dr Adam Hassan Yacoub
Director of Veterinary Services, Ministry of Livestock

20 February 2006
South Africa
Dr Bothle Michael Modisane
Senior Manager Animal Health, Department of Agriculture
Introduction
The purpose of this report is to provide proof of the absence of infection by classical swine fever in Argentina, in accordance with the requirements of Article 2.6.7.4., and to describe the sanitary measures, stipulated in Chapter 2.6.7 of the Terrestrial Code, that have been applied on the country’s territory. These measures are an essential factor enabling Argentina to be declared “a country free from classical swine fever”.

Organisation of the Sanitary Service and Strategic Alliance
In Argentina, the government organisation in charge of programmes for the control of animal diseases is the National Agrifood Health and Quality Service (SENASA). Operations have been carried out in collaboration with the National Advisory Commission for Swine Diseases (CONALEP), representing the various actors in the sector; farming organisations, diagnosis laboratories, vaccination developers, representatives from the slaughtering and transformation sector, INTA, veterinary faculties, professional groups, research centres, national and provincial official representatives, in other words, a true ‘strategic alliance’ working with the aim to improve the health of the pig population.

Risk assessment has been done so as to identify all the factors that contribute to the occurrence of classical swine fever (CSF).

The risk assessment was carried out through the Risk Analysis Unit in order to determine the situation of the bordering countries regarding CSF. At present, the situation is as follows:

- **Chile**: is a country free from the disease, and consequently the probability of introduction from its territory is insignificant.
- **Bolivia**: cases were reported until the year 2003, so it can be assumed that the probability of introduction from its territory is moderate.

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Translation of information received on 12 January 2006 from Dr Jorge Nestor Amaya, President, National Agrifood Health and Quality Service (SENASA), Secretariat for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food, Buenos Aires.

Argentina declares itself free from classical swine fever
news from colleagues

- **Paraguay**: no cases have been reported since July, 1995, therefore the probability of infection from this source is low.
- **Brazil**: the presence of the disease is limited to certain zones, and consequently its introduction from this country is highly improbable.
- **Uruguay**: no infection has been reported since 1991, and it is therefore improbable that the infectious agent would originate from this country.

**Measures to prevent the transmission of the virus through live pigs, sperm or embryos of pigs, contaminated material, vehicles, etc**

As organic waste from ships and aeroplanes, especially scraps from meals, present a serious risk of reintroducing classical swine fever, SENASA executes the procedures and the means of control that international transportation companies as well as port and airport concessionary companies have to apply to waste products, the obligation being to submit these products to biosecurity measures until they are eliminated completely.

**The history of classical swine fever**

There has been no infection among domestic pigs for at least 12 months. The last CSF outbreak was on the 30th May, 1999, in the Correa locality (Iriondo region, Santa Fe province) in a commercial pig farm with 210 susceptible animals, in which positive results were obtained from samples submitted to testing by immunofluorescence. In 1998 and 1999, respectively, 16 and 4 seats of infection were detected, although from April 1995 to February 1998, no CSF had been detected.

**Classical swine fever is a disease subject to compulsory notification throughout the country**

In Argentina, CSF is a disease subject to compulsory notification, as laid down by the SENASA Resolution Nº 422/03, imposing the notification of any case of suspected CSF in the country. Argentina has a System of Epidemiological Surveillance, based on the regulations in force, stipulating that notification of the disease is compulsory, both in official as well as in private circuits.

**All clinical symptoms compatible with classical swine fever are subject to onsite and/or laboratory testing.**

Within the framework for the Programme for the Eradication of CSF, a Manual of Procedures was drawn up and distributed to pig producers, as well as one for veterinary surgeons, in order to inform them about the identification, prevention and notification of suspicions and outbreaks of CSF. Since then, the following cases have been detected, notified and tested: a suspected case in the province of Salta, in 2003, 8 suspected cases (2 in Mendoza, 2 in Cordoba and 4 in Santa Fe) in 2004 and 3 suspected cases (1 in Jujuy and 2 in Santa Fe) during 2005.
Existence of a permanent monitoring programme encouraging the declaration of all cases compatible with classical swine fever

Among the Sanitary Education activities, the following are of particular importance: the edition and distribution of the Procedure Manual for the notification of suspected cases for pig producers, the distribution of the Procedure Manual for local veterinary surgeons and authorised persons, the distribution of information brochures for producers concerning the notification of cases and the edition by the GITEP (Pig Producers’ Technology Exchange Group) of the Monthly Information Bulletin.

The Veterinary Administration possesses revised data and has authority over pig farms throughout the country.

In the National Sanitary Registers for Agricultural Producers (RENSPA), in the year 2005, 47,047 holdings were censored and were classified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number of holdings</th>
<th>Number of pigs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelters</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial production</td>
<td>1,795</td>
<td>237,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter pasture (fattening)</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>232,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsistence</td>
<td>22,977</td>
<td>235,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family production</td>
<td>21,275</td>
<td>584,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47,047</td>
<td>1,321,802</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SENASA is in possession of revised data concerning the population and habitat of wild pigs throughout the country and there is a programme for the management of the disease among this swine population. Biosecurity measures have been taken to prevent wild pigs from transmitting the virus to domestic pigs. There are cases where wild boars (*Sus scrofa*) are present, but limited to a few national parks in different provinces. In these national parks, it is forbidden to maintain animals for an economic purpose and, in general, these parks are far from porcine production centres. A convention was signed with the National Parks Department with the aim to carry out epidemiological surveillance operations. Through these operations, 10 samples were taken in 2002, 12 in 2003, 51 in 2004 and 10 samples from 5 establishments in 2005. In every case, the results were negative.

Domestic pigs are identified once they leave their farm of origin with an indelible mark indicating the identification number of their herd; a reliable method of traceability is employed for all pigs leaving their farm of origin.

In Argentina, all animal owners are obliged by law to identify their animals with a mark on the ears, this being the principal system of ownership identification. The law fixes the delay within which the animals must be marked after birth. In order to
move pigs to any destination, for any purpose, they must be accompanied with a DTA (Animal Transit Document), the compulsory sanitary certificate for the transit of all animals, of any domestic species, delivered by SENASA authorised offices, as stipulated in the SENASA Resolution N° 849/98.

The vaccination of domestic pigs against classical swine fever has been prohibited throughout the country for at least one year
On the 27th February, 2004, Resolution SAGP and A n° 308 was ratified, prohibiting the vaccination against CSF of any susceptible species throughout the country, starting from the 28th May 2004. At the same time, the country disposes of 100,000 doses of vaccine that constitute a permanently accessible vaccine bank, whose expiry date is December, 2006.

Results of the surveillance system on classical swine fever in Argentina

Clinical inspection
In the 58 authorised slaughterhouses, ante and post mortem inspections were carried out on all the pigs, whose number reached 1,525,655 heads in 2003 and 1,793,318 heads in 2004. No case of CSF was detected.

Virology surveillance
Since the year 2002, virology surveillance operations have been carried out, entailing the taking of 5 samples (tonsils and ileum) from each lot of animals handed over to the national authorised slaughterhouses. With the aforementioned purpose, and as part of epidemiological surveillance, the following samples of tonsils and ileum were taken: in the year 1999, 1,911 samples were taken from 130 holdings, in the year 2001, 1,577 samples were taken from 175 holdings, in the year 2002, 6,212 samples were taken from 841 holdings, and all had negative results. In the year 2003, from 88 holdings, 789 samples of tonsils were taken, all with negative results. In the year 2004, from 279 pig pasturelands, 4,130 tonsil samples were taken, in which 51 belonged to wild pigs, and all had negative results. During 2005, 1,516 samples were taken from 65 holdings.

In total, from 1999 to 2005, 16,135 samples of tonsils and ileum were taken from 1,758 holdings. All the samples responded negatively to the tests to identify the CSF virus. In addition, in the year 2004, 279 holdings for fattening were inspected every month by local veterinary surgeons, and in each inspection they carried out clinical examinations and verifications, including the pigs’ handling conditions and alimentation.
Serological surveillance

In 2003, serological testing was carried out in sentinel establishments throughout the country and 2,145 samples of serum were taken from 467 holdings. All the results were negative.

In 2005, in accordance with the requirements of the OIE, a serological follow up was done to confirm the absence of infection by CSF. The operation was carried out from the 1st to the 31st March, 2005. In total, samples from 1,524 holdings were included. Among the pigs aged 6 to 12 months, 15 animals were taken per holding, representing a total of 19,872 samples, all of which showed negative results. In addition, during 2005, 1,516 samples of tonsil and ileum were taken from 65 farmlands, all of which also had negative results.

Conclusions

In view of the information above, it can be concluded that all the objectives laid down have been met successfully, and confirmed that:

• The legislation in force provides a broad scope of measures for the prevention and eradication of CSF. Thus all the requirements in the relative chapter in the Terrestrial Code have been fulfilled.
• From May, 1999, there have been no seats of CSF infection, and there have been no cases of pigs sick or infected by the disease.
• In the clinical inspections carried out on pig holdings, the presence of the disease has not been detected. In the ante mortem testing done in authorised slaughterhouses, no cases of CSF, nor any other pathology compatible with this disease, have been detected either.
• The system of epidemiological surveillance provides a coverage of the same magnitude as for other diseases (foot and mouth, Newcastle), and counts on the full participation of all the sectors carrying out the Eradication Plan.
• Importation procedures are based on prior risk analysis, done each time a request is formulated, and offer an adequate level of protection, and a sufficient level of prevention aimed at minimising the risk of introducing the infectious agent.
• The means and measures for biosecurity adopted by laboratories that produce vaccines, diagnosis laboratories and laboratories manipulating potentially infectious material, give particular importance to control in critical phases.
• Concerning carcass waste, the control and verification carried out on slaughtering procedures offer a sufficiently secure framework against the risk of spreading the disease.
Proposed new European Union legislation prompted a scientific literature review

From studies in laboratory animals, humans and horses, it is apparent that viruses may sometimes attach to, or be integrated into, spermatozoa, although in domestic livestock, including cattle, this seems to be a rare phenomenon, and carriage of virus through the zona pellucida into the oocyte by fertilising sperm has never been described in these species.

Four specific viruses: enzootic bovine leucosis virus (BLV), bovine herpesvirus-1 (BHV-1), bovine viral diarrhoea virus (BVDV) and bluetongue virus (BTV), all of which tend to cause subclinical infections in cattle, but which can occur in bovine semen, were review with regard to the risks that use of infected semen might lead to production of infected embryos.

With regards to in vivo-derived embryos, when internationally-approved embryo processing protocols are used, the risks from BLV- and BTV-infected semen appear to be negligible, and the same is almost certainly true for BHV-1 if the embryos are also treated with trypsin. This would apply especially to bulls that are not proven to be BHV-1 negative. For BVDV, there is insufficient data on how the virus is carried in semen and how different BVDV strains can interact with sperm, oocytes and embryos. There is a potential, at least, that in vivo-derived embryos resulting from virus-infected semen might carry BVDV, although field studies so far suggest this very unlikely.

With regard to in vitro-produced embryos, the use of semen infected with any of the four viruses, with probable exception of BLV, will often lead to contaminated embryos, and virus removal from in vitro fertilised (IVF) embryos is difficult even when the internationally-approved embryos processing protocols are used. However, it has never been demonstrated that such embryos have resulted in transmission of infection to recipients or offspring.
Conclusions and recommendations from the Expert Surveillance Panel on Equine Influenza Vaccines

These recommendations relating to the composition of vaccines for 2006 were made following review of the data arising from equine influenza surveillance by the panel of international collaborators for the period January 2005-January 2006. The recommendations for vaccine strains remain as for 2005.

Influenza activity 2005
Outbreaks of equine influenza in Denmark, France, Sweden, Tunisia, United Kingdom, and the United States of America were reported during 2005. Some outbreaks occurred in vaccinated animals but disease was generally mild.

All influenza activity was associated with H3N8 viruses. There were no reports of serological or virological evidence of H7N7 (equine-1) subtype viruses circulating in the equine population. Nevertheless, diagnostic laboratories should continue serological and virological monitoring and when using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) for rapid diagnosis, should ensure that primers specific for H7N7 virus as well as H3N8 virus are used.

Characteristics of recent isolates
All viruses characterised antigenically and/or genetically from Europe and North America during 2005 belonged to the ‘American’ lineage with the exception of one isolate in the UK. In haemagglutination inhibition (HI) tests using post infection ferret antisera American Lineage viruses isolated in Europe and North America were closely related to the prototype vaccine strain A/South Africa/4/2003 and the A/eq/Newmarket/5/2003 reference strain. The HA1 sequences of American lineage viruses isolated since 2003 in America, Europe and South Africa all fall within a single phylogenetic sub-group, previously referred to as the ‘Florida’ lineage (Lai et al., 2001; 2004). The sequences of viruses isolated in America since 2003 and represented by A/eq/South Africa/4/2003 (and A/eq/Ohio/2003) are characterised by two further amino acid changes in antigenic sites compared with the HA1 sequences of viruses isolated in Europe; these additional changes appear to contribute to greater antigenic drift from A/eq/Newmarket/1/93-like viruses currently included in vaccines. The European lineage virus isolated in 2005 reacted well in HI tests with ferret antisera against the European lineage reference strain A/eq/Newmarket/2/93.

Recommendations for the composition of equine influenza vaccines
During the period January 2005 to January 2006, H3N8 viruses of the ‘American’ lineage continued to circulate in Europe and North America with some vaccinated horses affected. These viruses, together with those responsible for the 2003/4 outbreaks in South Africa and circulating in North America were antigenically closely related to the currently recommended vaccine strains, A/eq/South Africa/4/2003-like. Only one virus belonging to the ‘European’ lineage was characterised during 2005 and no serious clinical episodes have been attributed to these viruses. Nonetheless, the recommendation remains that a European
lineage virus be included in vaccines and surveillance for European lineage viruses be continued.

It is recommended, therefore, that vaccines contain the following:

- an A/eq/South Africa/4/2003 (H3N8)-like virus (American lineage) 1
- an A/eq/Newmarket/2/93 (H3N8)-like virus (European lineage) 2
  2- A/eq/Suffolk/89 and A/eq/Borlänge/91, currently used vaccine strains, continue to be acceptable.

**Reference reagents**

Reference reagents specific for the recommended European lineage vaccine strains are available for standardisation of vaccine content by single radial diffusion (SRD) assay and can be obtained from the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC). Preparation of reagents for the 2005 recommendation is under review.

Three equine influenza horse antisera (anti-A/eq/Newmarket/77 [H7N7], anti-A/eq/Newmarket/1/93 [H3N8] and anti-A/eq/Newmarket/2/93 [H3N8]) are available as European Pharmacopoeia Biological Reference Preparations (EP BRPs) for serological testing of equine influenza vaccines by the single radial haemolysis assay. These antisera are also available from the OIE Reference Laboratory in Newmarket (UK) for use as primary standards in diagnostic serological testing. Pooled equine serum obtained post infection with A/eq/South Africa/4/2003 (H3N8) virus is currently the subject of an international collaborative study to establish this serum as an EP BRP / OIE primary standard to supersede the anti-A/eq/Newmarket/1/93 (H3N8) serum.

References:


New series

This volume on animal health inaugurates the new series ‘Agricultures tropicales en poche’, launched by a consortium comprising the Cirad, CTA, Karthala and Macmillan. It is the French version of the English-language series ‘Tropical Agriculturist’.

Summary

The protection of animal health in the tropics is a major concern, to which most governments in the countries concerned give priority in their efforts to improve livestock productivity. The subject is so vast that two volumes in this series are necessary to cover all its aspects.

The first volume deals with the causes and modes of transmission of disease, as well as the means of action available. It covers not only infections caused by micro-organisms, arthropods and helminths, but also metabolic disorders and intoxications.

Contents

Different types of diseases – Arthropods and helminths – Infectious diseases – Disease identification: signs of good health – Disease recognition: symptoms – Geographical distribution of diseases – Current procedures in veterinary medicine
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- United States Food Regulation
- European Union Food Regulation
- Latin American Food Regulation
- Canadian Food Regulation
- Middle East Food Regulation (in development)
- Asian Food Regulation (in development)

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Founding Director Emeritus and Professor Institute for Food Laws & Regulations Michigan State University 404 Agriculture Hall East Lansing, MI 48824-1302 Telephone: (517) 355-8295 Fax: (517) 432-1492 Email: verlege3@msu.edu iflr@msu.edu http://vu.msu.edu/preview/anr-ifl/

special events

Framework agreement on the progressive control of transboundary diseases

Since 2002, the OIE and FAO have been working to draw up a Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs), with the participation of WHO for zoonoses. Following some constructive discussions and much collaborative work, a technical dossier was put together and endorsed by the organisations, leading to the formalisation of a framework agreement between the OIE and FAO in 2005, known as GF-TADs. A joint Global Early Warning and Response System for major animal diseases (GLEWS) was set up as part of GF-TADs. After further discussions between the three organisations, the final GLEWS technical dossier was drawn up and endorsed by the three organisations at their annual meeting at OIE headquarters in Paris in February 2006. It is expected to become a formalised agreement between the three organisations in the next few months, with this new joint early warning and response platform due to be made operational after defining a work plan. In 2005, the three organisations set up a system that prefigured GLEWS, relying on e-mail exchanges of unofficial information gathered from the various information sources, which the organisations must verify as part of their respective mandates.
June

- **SPS meeting and OIE ‘Train the trainer’ seminar**
  - 11-13 June
  - Cairo, Egypt
  - OIE Regional Activities Department

- **Joint FAO / WHO/OIE Expert Consultation on Antimicrobial Use in Aquaculture and Antimicrobial Resistance**
  - 13-16 June
  - Seoul, Republic of Korea
  - www.oie.int/downld/FAO_WHO_OIE_Aquaculture/

- **2006 JIFSAN Summer Integrated Program in Food Safety Risk Analysis**
  - Washington, DC
  - United States of America
  - jifsan@umail.umd.edu

- **Diffusion of the new OIE World Animal Health Information System**
  - Andean Region
  - OIE Regional Representation for the Americas

- **12th International Congress for Infectious Diseases**
  - 15-18 June
  - Lisbon, Portugal
  - www.isid.org/12th_ICID/

July

- **9th Pan-American Dairy Congress**
  - 20-23 June
  - Porto Alegre, Brazil
  - info@fepale.org
  - www.9panleche.com

- **4th International Veterinary Vaccines and Diagnostics Conference**
  - 25-30 June
  - Oslo, Norway
  - www.ivvdc.org/ivvdc@veso.no

- **EU/OIE Seminar on Collaboration between EC and European non EC Member Countries**
  - 27-28 June
  - Croatia
  - OIE Regional Activities Department

- **EU/OIE Seminar on Collaboration between EC and European non EC Member Countries**
  - 29-30 June
  - Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - OIE Regional Activities Department

- **Asian European Conference on Avian Influenza**
  - 29-30 June
  - Pasteur Institute, Paris France
  - www.isanh.com

August

- **2nd Seminar on the Evaluation of Veterinary Services**
  - 10-13 July
  - OIE Headquarters
  - OIE Regional Activities Department

- **SPS meeting and OIE ‘Train the trainer’ seminar**
  - 17-20 July
  - Vienna, Austria
  - OIE Regional Activities Department

- **Annual Seminar on Bovine Brucellosis**
  - 27-30 July
  - Buenos Aires, Argentina
  - OIE Regional Representation for the Americas

September

- **OIE/FAO-APHCA WTO-XII European Poultry Conference – EPC 2006**
  - 10-14 September
  - Verona, Italy
  - www.epc2006.veronafiere.it/index.htm
  - epc2006@wpsa.it

- **SPS Workshop in collaboration with CMU/DLD/FUB**
  - Chiang Mai, Thailand
  - OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific

- **7th International Congress of Veterinary Virology**
  - 24-26 September
  - Lisbon, Portugal
  - Dr Carlos Martins
  - esvv2006@fmv.utl.pt
  - www.esvv2006.org/

- **22nd Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe**
  - 25-29 September
  - Lyons, France
  - OIE Regional Activities Department
October

EU/OIE Seminar on Collaboration between EC and European non EC Member Countries
2-3 October, Georgia
OIE Regional Activities Department

ICLAS/AALAS International Conference
15-19 October
Salt Lake City
United States of America
www.iclas.org

27th IDF World Dairy Congress
20-23 October
Shanghai, China
www.idf2006shcn.com

Sixth Working Group Meeting of Animal Movement Management and Zoning Approach for Foot and Mouth Disease Control in the Upper Mekong Basin
1-8 November, Asia
OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific

November

OIE/SEAFDEC Hands-on Training Workshop on Aquatic Animal Disease Diagnosis
Ilolo, Philippines
OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific

XX Pan American Congress of Veterinary Sciences and XIV Chilean Congress of Veterinary Medicine
Diego Portales Convention Centre, Santiago de Chile, Chile
www.panvet2006.cl/

OIE/FAO-APHCA Workshop on BSE Diagnosis and Surveillance
Japan
OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific

December

Meeting of OIE Laboratories of Reference
3-5 December
Brazil
Scientific and Technical Department

March

II International Seminar on Animal Health, SISA 2007
7-9 March
San José de las Lajas
La Habana, Cuba
Dr. Siomara Martínez Marrero
Scientific Secretary
siomara@censa.edu.cu

June

7th Nordic Symposium on Fish Immunology
17-23 June
Stirling, Scotland
Dr. Janina Costa
Phone: +44(0) 1786 466-598
noffi@stir.ac.uk
www.noffi.org

40 2006 • 2 international news

2006

agenda
question:

question:

OIE official animal disease status: Recently there are some outbreaks of Avian Influenza in the wild birds in European countries. I would like to know the official opinion of OIE whether countries with wild bird outbreaks only are classified as AI infected countries or not.

answer:

There is no OIE official recognition of disease-free status for avian influenza. Any claim to status (NAI free or HPNAI free) is based on a self-declaration by the country concerned based on OIE Standards, to be published by the OIE on request.

Article 2.7.12.1. of the avian influenza chapter in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (the Terrestrial Code), defines “notifiable avian influenza (NAI),” “poultry” and “infection with NAI” as follows:

NAI: for the purposes of this Terrestrial Code, avian influenza in its notifiable form (NAI) is defined as an infection of poultry caused by any influenza A virus of the H5 or H7 subtypes or by any AI virus with an intravenous pathogenicity index (IVPI) greater than 1.2 (or as an alternative at least 75% mortality) as described below…

Poultry: all domesticated birds used for the production of meat or eggs for consumption, for the production of other commercial products, for restocking supplies of game, or for breeding these categories of birds.

Infection with NAI virus:

a) HPNAI virus has been isolated and identified as such or viral RNA specific for HPNAI has been detected in poultry or a product derived from poultry, or

b) LPNAI virus has been isolated and identified as such or viral RNA specific for LPNAI has been detected in poultry or a product derived from poultry; or

c) antibodies to H5 or H7 subtype of NAI virus that are not a consequence of vaccination have been detected in poultry. In the case of isolated serological positive results, NAI infection may be ruled out on the basis of a thorough epidemiological investigation that does not demonstrate further evidence of NAI infection.

Article 2.7.12.2. describes how NAI status may be determined, emphasising the importance of surveillance.

Articles 2.7.12.3. and 2.7.12.4. define the conditions for NAI or HPNAI freedom, including following an occurrence of infection. They refer to the need of surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9.

Article 2.7.12.3

NAI free country, zone or compartment:
A country, zone or compartment may be considered free from NAI when it has been shown that neither HPNAI nor LPNAI infection has been present in the country, zone or compartment for the past 12 months, based on surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9…

Article 2.7.12.4

HPNAI free country, zone or compartment:
A country, zone or compartment may be considered free from HPNAI when it has been shown that HPNAI infection has not been present in the country, zone or compartment for the past 12 months, although its LPNAI status may be unknown, when, based on surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9., it does not meet the criteria for freedom from NAI but any NAI virus detected has not been identified as HPNAI virus…

Appendix 3.8.9. of the Terrestrial Code provides guidelines for the surveillance of NAI to complement Chapter 2.7.12. This appendix should be applied according to the definition of NAI in Chapter 2.7.12. which refers to infection in poultry only. In fact, in the introduction to the Appendix, it notes that “no country can declare itself free from avian influenza in wild birds.”

Article 3.8.9.4. describes the documentation needed for declaring freedom from NAI or HPNAI for a country, zone or compartment and notes the need for an effective surveillance program. It indicates that the surveillance needs to demonstrate the absence of NAIV or HPNAIV infection, during the preceding 12 months, in susceptible poultry populations. It notes the need, under certain circumstances, to target surveillance to those poultry populations at specific risks linked to the types of production, possible direct or indirect contact with wild birds, etc.

Therefore, under the OIE standards, countries which are meeting Articles 2.7.12.3. or 2.7.12.4. (including surveillance in accordance with Appendix 3.8.9.) and which have found NAIV only in wild birds, do not lose their status with regard to NAI in poultry.

Finally, it should be noted that, addressing the importance of knowing as much as possible about virus circulation in the environment, the Terrestrial Code 2006 clarifies the obligation of Member Countries to notify the OIE of any occurrence of HPAI in birds, not only in poultry but also in wild birds. As explained above, such notification itself should not affect the ability of the reporting Member Country to trade in accordance with the Terrestrial Code recommendations.
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