

**VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE AD HOC GROUP ON THE EVALUATION
OF AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS STATUS OF MEMBERS
5-7 October 2021**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The purpose of the *ad hoc* Group on African Horse Sickness (AHS) status of Members is to evaluate the applications for official recognition of AHS free status, in accordance with [the OIE procedure for official recognition of animal health status and for the endorsement of official control programmes](#).

Background

OIE Members can be officially recognised as free from AHS through the adoption of a resolution by the World Assembly of Delegates of the OIE at the General Session in May every year. A Member wishing to be officially recognised as having an AHS free status should submit the [questionnaire](#) laid out in Chapter 1.7 of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)* and comply with all requirements specified in the *Terrestrial Code* for AHS. The OIE [Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases](#) (Scientific Commission) is responsible for undertaking, on behalf of the Assembly, the assessment of OIE Members' applications for their compliance with OIE standards. The assessment carried out by the Scientific Commission is based on the recommendations formulated by a relevant *ad hoc* Group. *Ad hoc* groups are convened under the authority of and report to the OIE Director General.

Specific issues to be addressed

The Group will screen and evaluate in detail the applications from Members to assess whether the Member complies with the requirements specified for AHS in the *Terrestrial Code*. Based on that evaluation, the Group will provide a recommendation to the Scientific Commission.

Prerequisites

Ad hoc Group members should:

- Sign the OIE Undertaking on Confidentiality of information (if not done already);
- Complete the Declaration of Interest Form;
- Understand that the membership of the Group may be retained between *ad hoc* group meetings to ensure continuity of the work.

Actions to deliver

Before the meeting

Upon reception of an application from a Member, the Status Department (SD) conducts a preliminary screening to check the conformity of the dossier (structure of the dossier in accordance with the SOP and with the relevant questionnaire, main sections of the questionnaire, regular notification to the OIE, payment of the fee, PVS report, etc.). If an information gap is identified, the SD requests additional information to the Member.

As the OIE Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) reports are bound by the OIE rules on confidentiality of information, the SD and experts will consider from the evaluation the available PVS reports if not obsolete or confidential.

The SD will send the working documents to the *ad hoc* Group, including the dossiers received from applicants, at least one month before the Group meeting (**i.e., 5 September 2021**).

The experts can request support from the SD at any time.

The SD suggests the nomination of a Chair and Rapporteur for the Group's consideration.

The experts are expected to:

- Be familiar with Chapters [1.7](#) and [12.1](#) of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Evaluate and study in detail all dossiers provided by the OIE;
- Take into account any other information available in the public domain that is considered pertinent for the evaluation of the dossiers;
- Summarise the dossiers according to Chapter 1.7 requirements by completing the summary tables provided by the SD;
- Draft questions to the applicant Members whenever the evaluation of the dossiers identifies incomplete or unclear information;
- Submit to the SD the completed summary tables for each application together with possible questions at least 10 days before the teleconference (i.e., **24 September 2021**);

The SD will compile the summary tables and the questions to be forwarded to the applicant Members before the teleconference. The SD will forward to experts all subsequent information and material provided by a Member.

During the meeting

- Agree on the appointment of the Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting (the Chair will lead the discussion and the Rapporteur will ensure that the report reflects the discussion and captures the detailed assessment of the dossiers);
- Mention any potential conflict of interest and, if relevant, withdraw him/herself from the discussion;
- Contribute to the discussions;
- Contribute to drafting the report.

If during the teleconference the Group decides that additional information should be requested to the applicant Members before an informed conclusion can be drawn, the SD forwards the additional information to the Group at a later date. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the finalisation of the assessment and for ensuring that the views of all Group members are taken into consideration.

Should the Group not be able to complete its Terms of Reference during this meeting, experts' contributions will be solicited after the meeting, including by teleconference if needed.

After the meeting

The SD will circulate the draft report after the teleconference is over. Experts are expected to contribute to the finalisation of the report within the following week of the electronic consultation.

The SD will circulate the final version of the report to the Group once endorsed by the Scientific Commission and is published online.

Deliverables

Detailed report to recommend to the Scientific Commission the country(ies) or zone(s) to be recognised (or not) as free from AHS; and to indicate any information gaps or specific areas that should be addressed in the future by the applicant Member(s).

Reporting / timeline

The OIE will circulate the draft report no more than seven days after the teleconference (no later than 15 October 2021) and the Group will finalise its report within the following week (indicative deadline: 22 October 2021).