

## OIE WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL WELFARE

### Report to the 78th General Session of the OIE World Assembly of Delegates

Paris, 23–28 May 2010

Dr David Bayvel, Chairman of the Working Group on Animal Welfare, presented the report on the Group's activities.

The Working Group on Animal Welfare (hereafter "the Working Group") held its eighth meeting in Paris from 30 June to 2 July, 2009.

In accordance with the established practice for industry representation, the International Meat Secretariat (IMS) member participated as a full member in 2009. Representatives of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and the International Dairy Federation (IDF) participated as observers and attended the second day of the meeting only.

At this meeting, the Working Group agreed on the following work programme priorities:

- Ongoing revision of standards on land transport, sea transport, slaughter for human consumption, killing for disease control purposes, and stray dog population control.
- Finalisation of standards for the welfare during slaughter of farmed fish to be proposed for adoption at the 2010 General Session.
- Finalisation of additional text to address gaps in adopted standards on the slaughter, transport and killing of poultry.
- Finalisation of standards on the use of animals in research and education, to be proposed for adoption at the 2010 General Session.
- Further development of draft standards for animal welfare in livestock productions systems (broiler chickens and beef cattle).
- Development of criteria to establish future priorities for standards development.
- Development of criteria to guide the evaluation of future applications to be recognised as an OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centre.

The Chairman of the Working Group continued to hold regular teleconferences with OIE Headquarters, to discuss work programme progress and other issues of operational and strategic significance. Valuable teleconferences of the full working group and the Laboratory Animal *ad hoc* Group were also held prior to the February 2010 Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission meeting.

The Working Group noted the increasing importance of the active involvement of all OIE members to consolidate progress made to date, with particular emphasis on the implementation of OIE standards. This involvement requires close liaison and collaboration with OIE Regional Commissions and Representatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. The Working Group also noted that the Regional Animal Welfare Strategy developed for the Asia, Far East and Oceania Region had now been complemented by a detailed Implementation Plan and recommended that other OIE Regions consider adopting this model.

Communication and consultation with interested parties were two important activities of the Working Group. These activities were supported by the OIE website, the OIE *Bulletin*,

the 2005 special issue of the *Scientific and Technical Review* entitled “Animal Welfare: Global Issues, Trends and Challenges” and the October 2008 Technical Series publication “The Scientific Assessment and Management of Animal Pain”, which provided important sources of information and underlined the OIE’s international leadership role in setting animal welfare standards.

The Working Group would hold its ninth meeting from 23 to 25 June 2010. This meeting would include a joint session with representatives of OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centres, who would be attending the second OIE Global Conference of Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres to be held from 21 to 23 June 2010.

1. Dr Bayvel then provided an update on additional key issues currently under consideration by the Working Group.
  2. Dr Bayvel noted the significant progress made by the OIE in reviewing the role of private standards and the acceptance that private standards for animal welfare played a different role from those for animal health and food safety.
  3. Dr Bayvel acknowledged the progress made by the laboratory animal welfare *ad hoc* group in developing the chapter proposed for adoption. He also noted other priority activities relating to laboratory animal transport, the use of animals for regulatory testing and specialist training needs for laboratory animal veterinarians.
  4. Dr Bayvel confirmed that the Working Group had provided criteria to prioritise future standard development as well as criteria to assess future applications to be recognised as OIE Animal Welfare Collaborating Centres.
  5. Dr Bayvel confirmed that the Working Group was monitoring progress with the EU Welfare Quality Project because of its strategic significance in relation to welfare indicators.
  6. Dr Bayvel noted that training seminars for animal welfare focal points were currently under way in all five OIE regions and commended this important initiative.
  7. Dr Bayvel drew the attention of Delegates to several important developments, including the establishment of four OIE animal welfare Collaborating Centres; the OIE participation in the initiative of the FAO in developing the ‘Gateway to Farm Animal Welfare’ web portal; the ongoing collaboration with the Veterinary Services of Egypt; the holding of the AAVMC/AVMA veterinary education conferences; and, finally, the OIE relationship with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the current consideration of the problems with air transport of animals for use in scientific research.
  8. Dr Bayvel identified the maintenance of momentum in all these important areas of work as the principal challenge for the future. He noted the important role of OIE Focal Points and the ongoing application of the PVS Tool in strengthening Veterinary Services. He also commented on the significant contribution of the FAO in national capacity building.
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