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September 2007

REPORT OF THE MEETING
OF THE OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION FOR ANIMAL DISEASES

Paris, 18 - 20 September 2007

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A meeting of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases was held at the OIE Headquarters in Paris, France from 18 to 20 September 2007. Dr. Gideon Brückner, Head of the Scientific and Technical Department welcomed the participants on behalf of Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE and introduced the agenda of the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Prof. Vincenzo Caporale, President of the Scientific Commission and Dr. Preben Willeberg was rapporteur.

The Commission approved the provisional agenda but it was agreed to address points 1, 3 and 7 on the agenda on the first day due to the possible absence of the chairman on the second day. The Commission expressed its appreciation of the Central Bureau's effort in sending working documents in advance with clarification of issues that needed to be addressed. It was agreed that reports of *ad hoc* Groups falling under jurisdiction will also be circulated after the meeting of *ad hoc* Groups to members of the Commission for their notification..

The agenda and the list of participants are attached as Appendices I and II.

1. Report of the Meeting of the Bureau of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, 26 May 2007

The Commission reviewed the May meeting report of the Bureau and discussed several issues which were addressed at the 75th General Session that might be incorporated into the future work programme. Added to the working program for 2007/2008 were the *ad hoc* Groups for Wildlife disease surveillance, Vector-borne diseases/climatic changes, Crimean Congo Haemorrhagic Fever and Swine vesicular disease.

1.1. Handbook for animal disease surveillance

Noting that surveillance for vector-borne diseases and surveillance on wildlife are indispensable elements for the handbook for animal disease surveillance, it was agreed that the work should start after receiving the reports of the *ad hoc* Group meetings of these issues currently planned in November 2007 and January 2008 respectively. The Commission recalled the successful arrangement for the development of the 'Handbook on Import Risk Analysis for Animal and Animal Products', and agreed to commence the work with a meeting to discuss the outline of the handbook content, possibly at one of the OIE Collaborating Centers for Epidemiology in Teramo (Italy), inviting representatives from all three collaborating centres (Teramo, Ft. Collins, Copenhagen). The Commission considered that participation of other experts would be helpful and welcomed. Possible contributors/authors for the intended handbook will also be invited.

With regard to the status of various OIE publications, the Commission discussed the difference between scientific articles and policy related documents, such as 'guidelines' and 'recommendations'. The Commission considered that if guidelines or recommendations are published under the name of the OIE or jointly under the names of the OIE and other international organisations, such work should be reviewed and approved by one of the appropriate Specialist Commissions, e.g. the Scientific Commission in the case of scientific topic, before publication. Regarding the intended publication of an information booklet on bluetongue control in Northern Europe, the President of the Commission expressed his willingness to have a peer review process from OIE experts and content reflecting the situation of the disease in the whole of Europe

1.2. Networks for OIE Reference Laboratories for specific diseases

The chairman reported the discussions on FMD reference laboratory network with the laboratories involved during his visits to the laboratories in Botswana and South Africa and discussions with PANAFTOSA. The chairman was requested by the Central Bureau to include visits to FAO, EUFMD and UK for inclusion in the report. A preliminary report will be submitted by the chairman to the Director General. He also reported the progress on the development of a network for bluetongue, and expressed his view that the bluetongue network could be used as a template for future disease specific networks. The Commission agreed that a network's secretariat should not be fixed to any single laboratory and, where not rotating among member laboratories, be the OIE Central Bureau. The Commission also agreed that information system of the networks should be developed within the OIE information system and that the networks should not exclude national laboratories wishing to join the network.

The Commission also discussed the requirements and status of OIE reference laboratories. While recognising that this is a matter for the Biological Standard Commission, the Commission felt that reference laboratories should strictly respect OIE safety standards so as to avoid any biosecurity problems. It also noted that not only reference laboratories, but also national laboratories interacting with laboratories abroad should be reminded of the importance of respecting safety standards. The Commission further agreed that the title of the reference laboratories should be unified.

1.3. FMD mission to South America – December 2007

Dr Brückner briefed the Commission on a follow-up mission to South America on FMD planned for 8 to 14 December 2007. It was noted that the chairman will visit PANAFTOSA in October in accordance with the request of the Director General to investigate the FMD reference laboratories network.

2. Work plan and activities

The Commission reviewed the work plan prepared in July 2006 and noted that all issues listed have already been taken up.

Dr Brückner reminded the Commission about the following issues recently addressed/readdressed and the Commission agreed to add these issues into its work plan as proposed by the Central Bureau:

- Surveillance for wildlife diseases: an *ad hoc* Group meeting will be convened in January 2008;
- Surveillance for vector-borne diseases and climatic changes: an *ad hoc* Group meeting will be convened in November 2007;
- Surveillance guidelines for bovine brucellosis: a new *ad hoc* Group will be convened to finalise draft guidelines and review the current *Terrestrial Code* chapter following comments from Member Countries and the Terrestrial Code Commission;
- Various BSE issues (atypical scrapie/BSE, review of *Code* Chapter, Appendices on surveillance and risk assessment, and status evaluation questionnaire): an *ad hoc* Group to discuss various BSE issues will be convened in November 2007;
- Reconstitution of *ad hoc* Groups on vaccine and vaccine banks/NSP tests – FMD: The Director General will be requested to convene a new *ad hoc* Group to deal with all scientific issues on FMD in addition to the existing *ad hoc* Group for country status evaluation. It was agreed that the existing *ad hoc* Group on vaccines and vaccine banks be disbanded.

– *Ad hoc* Group on Swine vesicular disease: it was decided to add the formulation of such an *ad hoc* Group on the future work programme of the Commission to carry out the review of the chapter requested by a Member Country;

– Development of *Code* chapter on small hive beetle: considering the lack of response by experts to two drafts prepared by Member Countries, the Terrestrial Code Commission would be requested by the Scientific Commission to prepare a new draft chapter based on those inputs.

3. Reports of *ad hoc* Groups

3.1. *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology with invited experts on Avian influenza and Newcastle disease

The Commission reviewed the report (Appendix III) and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from18 to 19 June 2007.

The Commission agreed on the recommendation to specify Newcastle disease to be notified as "Newcastle disease: all vNDV isolates in all birds." However, the Commission is of the view that such specification should be clarified in each disease chapter or the surveillance guidelines, and not in Chapter 2.1.1. on criteria for listing diseases. In the latter only the name of the disease that should be listed must be cited.

The Commission agreed on the recommendation regarding the use throughout the *Code* of "*laboratory* which is *approved*" instead of "*approved laboratory*". This issue will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission.

The Commission agreed on the recommendation on defining "clinical surveillance" in App 3.8.1.and expressed its view that definitions should be adopted from relevant dictionaries on epidemiology if available.

The Commission disagreed with the *ad hoc* Group on the recommendation to the Terrestrial Code Commission to define the meaning of "incubation period" which is much longer than actual incubation period which is observed throughout the *Code*. The Commission is of the view that the introductory wording, "for the purpose of this *Code*," makes clear that such phrase does not mean the scientific incubation period.

The Commission endorsed the revisions made by the *ad hoc* Group to Chapter 2.7.12, the draft chapter on 2.7.13, Appendix 3.8.9. and draft Appendix 3.8.X. These revisions will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission with a note that the current definition of "poultry" might need to be reconsidered, as it is impractical for veterinary services to manage the distinction between back-yard flocks for production purposes and those for hobby use.

The Commission did not support the *ad hoc* Group's view that it would be difficult to add AI and/or ND to the disease list for OIE official country status recognition. The reason stated by the *ad hoc* Group, the importance of wild birds in the epidemiology, seems to contradict to what the *Code* stipulates for freedom in poultry population. Although the Commission believes that the OIE should recognise official disease status for as many diseases as possible, the Commission considers that a decision on this aspect also has political implications.

3.2. *Ad hoc* Group on Antigen and vaccine banks

The Commission took note of the report and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from 15 to 16 February 2007.

The Commission reviewed the report and recalled its suggestion for termination of this *ad hoc* Group and reorganising two *ad hoc* groups on FMD - one for scientific related issues and another for recognising country freedom which has already been added to the working plan of the Commission.

It was noted that activities proposed by this *ad hoc* Group will be included in the report of the President to the Director General on a proposed policy for disease specific reference laboratory networks.

3.3. *Ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue Network

The Commission reviewed the report (Appendix IV) and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at Civitella del Tronto, Italy from 12 to 14 March 2007 and endorsed the report.

The Commission agreed that the network should be open to all interested laboratories and collaborating centres involved in bluetongue. It was noted that the next meeting will be held in March / April 2008.

3.4. *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology

The Commission reviewed the report (Appendix V) and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from10 to 22 June 2007.

The Commission fully supported the *ad hoc* Group's reconfirmation of its view on "buffer zone" to be not obligatory and requested that the Terrestrial Code Commission be informed of the view of the Commission.

The Commission endorsed the revisions to Chapter 2.2.10 proposed by the *ad hoc* Group, with certain modifications in the first paragraphs of Articles 2.2.10.3, 2.2.10.4, and 2.2.10.5 regarding the indispensability of "buffer zone or physical / geographical barriers" to make them consistent with the discussion of the *ad hoc* Group (i.e. "should be separated by buffer zone' was replaced by 'may be separated by buffer zone'). The Commission also endorsed revised definitions of "surveillance" and "monitoring" and a new definition of "herd" proposed by the *ad hoc* Group. These will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission.

The Commission supported the view of the *ad hoc* Group on the application of "compartment" to vector-borne diseases. It believes that there is no scientific reason to doubt the possibility of vector proof establishments as virus proof establishments are possible.

The Commission discussed the two possible pathways to go in respect of disease-free certification - not only in respect of CSF but also other OIE listed diseases where wild animals play a role in the epidemiology of the disease i.e. to either focus declaring a country, zone and compartment free of disease in domestic animals even if the disease is in wildlife (such as for AI), or require freedom in wildlife before a country, zone or compartment could be certified free. The situation would also differ depending whether a disease is endemic in wildlife or whether it occurs only incidentally in wildlife. The Commission agreed that this concept needed to be further discussed as it also has political implications over and above the scientific justification. It was suggested that the concept of disease freedom in domestic animals but not in wildlife should be tested and proposed for discussion as it is currently related to CSF.

3.5. *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology

The Commission reviewed the report (Appendix VI) and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from 5 to 7 September 2007.

The Commission endorsed comments made by the *ad hoc* Group concerning comments from Member Countries on Chapter 1.3.5. and the draft Appendix on surveillance guidelines. These will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission.

Noting that the *ad hoc* Group considers it necessary to ask expert opinion for certain issues in the revised Chapter on CBPP, the Commission decided to refer the text back to the *ad hoc* Group on CBPP country status evaluation for consideration. For the same reason, Appendix 3.8.2. 'Guidelines for the surveillance of rinderpest' will also be referred back to the *ad hoc* Group on Rinderpest country status evaluation.

As to developing general guidelines on the application of epidemiological modelling, it was agreed that Dr Willeberg will prepare a draft for the next Commission meeting in February.

The Commission discussed the proposal by the *ad hoc* Group on the fast track procedure to regain disease free or infection free status following the establishment of a containment zone i.e. the *ad hoc* Group recommended that on receipt of the relevant information from the Member Country which establishes the containment zone, the Central Bureau sends information to reference laboratories and/or

members of the *ad hoc* Group on FMD country status evaluation for electronic consultation; if necessary, the Central Bureau may convene a meeting at the expense of the applicant Member Country; the OIE reply (positive/negative) will be sent to the Member Country within 14 days (10 working days) in the case of FMD. The Commission however, suggested that on receipt of an application a special meeting of the Bureau of the Commission will be convened and if necessary, expert opinion will be sought. Due to the need to have an expedited process the application would therefore not be referred to an *ad hoc* Group but dealt with directly by the Bureau of the Commission. The Director General is requested to advise on the covering of the additional costs that might emanate from such an expedited procedure.

The Commission reiterated that status recognition in general should become effective sooner than under the current procedure: if there is no objection received from Member Countries within 60 days after sending the draft resolution, the proposed status should become effective. The Commission considers that a resolution to this effect should be proposed at the General Session in May 2008.

3.6. *Ad hoc* Group on listing diseases

The Commission reviewed the report and recommendations of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from 3 to 4 September 2007

The Commission agreed with the *ad hoc* Group on the diseases to be added to the list of notifiable diseases.

3.7. *Ad hoc* Group for Country Evaluation for BSE risk (joint report July and September)

The Commission reviewed the joint report (Appendix VII) and recommendations of the meetings of the *ad hoc* Group that met at OIE Headquarters from16 to 20 July and 12 to 14 September 2007

The Commission expressed its appreciation of the hard work done by the *ad hoc* Group and Dr Lea Knopf, and endorsed the report including the proposed status for each applicant Member. The Commission believed that documents in the dossier submitted by applicant Members should, with the exception of legislation, not be accepted unless written in one of the OIE's three official languages and adhering to the prescribed format of the BSE Questionnaire.

The Commission considers that there should be a risk status suspension clause in the *Code Chapter*: if a country with negligible risk status finds a case, the status should be suspended until evidence to support its status in accordance with the requirements of the *Code* is supplied to the OIE. The Terrestrial Code Commission will be requested to consider insertion of text to this effect in the current *Terrestrial Code* Chapter.

4. Requests for scientific information

Requested by the Terrestrial Code Commission, the Commission examined scientific information collected by the Central Bureau on the following issues. The opinions of the Commission together with information collected will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission for possible amendments to the relevant *Terrestrial Code* chapters.

4.1. Inactivation of FMD virus

The Commission examined information on inactivation of FMD virus received from FMD experts responding to the request of the OIE Central Bureau. The Commission agreed with the conditions required for casing proposed by an expert based on a scientific paper (Wijnker, J.J. *et al.* Removal of foot-and –mouth disease virus infectivity in salted natural casings by minor adaptation of standardised industrial procedure: *International Journal of Food Microbiology*, 2006)

> "For animal casings of small ruminants and pigs, the presentation of international veterinary certificate attesting that these products have been processed to ensure the destruction of the FMD virus in conformity with the following (combined) procedures: salting for at least 30 days, either with dray salt (NaCl) or with saturated brine (Aw < 0.80), and kept at room temperature during this entire period."

Although the expert commented that the conditions could be extrapolated to cattle based on the similarity of virus tropism between cattle and small ruminants, considering that the original experiment was performed using casings of small ruminants, the Commission considered that at this point the conditions should be applied only to small ruminants and pigs and the application to cattle should be placed under study.

4.2. Inactivation of Newcastle disease virus

The Commission reviewed information received from experts on NDV inactivation as well as on AI virus inactivation. The Commission is of the view that the requirements in Appendix 3.6.5. should be reconsidered by the Code Commission in view of this new scientific opinion.

4.3. Safety of semen with regard to equine influenza

The Commission noted that all responded experts were unaware of any evidence which indicated that equine influenza virus could be transmitted via semen. Therefore, the Commission considers that the 'under study' of Article 2.5.5.4 could be lifted.

4.4. Country rabies status and bat lyssavirus (Australian Bat Lyssavirus vs. European Bat Lyssavirus)

Based on the agreed opinion of experts, the Commission considers that Australian bat lyssavirus should be treated equally in the *Code* as is currently the case with European bat lyssavirus.

4.5. Use of the lactoperoxidase system to inactivate pathogens in milk/dairy products

The Central Bureau reported that there is no information available for the consideration by the Commission but took note that the International Dairy Federation (IDF) has publicly stated their objection for using lactoperoxidase as an antiviral or antibacterial inactivation.

5. Official disease free status matters

5.1. Administrative procedures for recovery of free status for diseases other than FMD

Addressed at agenda item 3 e).

5.2. Administrative procedure for recognition of containment zones "fast track"

Addressed at agenda item 3 e).

5.3. Administrative procedures for reconfirmation of a given disease status

The Commission noted that the Terrestrial Code Commission is preparing text to be added to relevant disease Chapters as requirements for annual status reconfirmation equivalent to that adopted during the 75th General Session in May 2007 for the *Terrestrial Code* chapter on FMD.

The Commission agreed that more information than the current simple notification saying "no change" should be required for annual confirmation to maintain the given status, while it would be neither necessary nor practical to request and re-examine a dossier for each country being listed free of disease: a short list of questions in support of the requirements of the relevant *Terrestrial Code* chapter need to be confirmed annually by Delegates. The Commission requested that the Director General inform Delegates through a general circular on their obligations in this regard.

6. Issues referred to Scientific Commission by the Code Commission

On request of the Terrestrial Code Commission, the Commission reviewed Member Country comments on several chapters. Detailed comments will be referred to the Terrestrial Code Commission.

6.1. Member Country comments on Chapter on Chapter 2.3.3. (bovine tuberculosis)

While the Commission decided that the request to recognise tests other than the tuberculin test will be referred to the Biological Standard Commission, it reiterated that care should be taken to ensure that new proposed tests alternative to the intradermal tuberculin test deliver the same level of confidence as is the case in cattle.

In response to the request to the comment to make the Chapter applicable to wild life, the Commission expressed the view that it would require validated test for such species. Therefore, this issue will be referred to the Biological Standards Commission. Similarly, addition of farmed deer and related modifications such as developing conditions for antler velvet would be agreeable only if the tuberculin test is effective to use in deer.

The Commission agreed with a commenting Member Country that it should be made clear in Article 2.3.3.2. that point 3 is to obtain freedom, point 4 is to maintain freedom: a country that wants to maintain freedom could implement abattoir surveillance without the need for additional TB testing of live animals. However the conditions to maintain free status is a general problem, e.g. how long a country needs to continue active surveillance after declaring freedom and this should be discussed within the epidemiology *ad hoc* Group in relation to all diseases, and in relation to historical freedom.

Regarding a comment on lowering the disease prevalence required for surveillance in point 4 of Article 2.3.3.2., the Commission questioned if a country can achieve 0.0% prevalence.

Regarding a comment to add new requirement of no clinical signs requirement to Article 2.3.3.5., the Commission agreed to such addition for consistency while believing that scientifically it does not make sense.

6.2. Member Country comments on draft Chapter 2.6.7 (classical swine fever).

The Commission did not agree to a proposal to incorporate the situation with possible infection in wild pig population to the free status even with additional conditions proposed. It believes that a country with wild pig population which does not satisfy conditions stipulated in vii) and viii) should rather consider the establishment of compartment for a disease free situation.

A request to clarify the phrase of 'validated means' appears several times such as in point 2 ii) of Article 2.6.7.4. was agreed and replaced by 'means validated to OIE standards'.

A proposed revision of point 2 ii) of Article 2.6.7.4. regarding the distinction between vaccinated and infected pigs will be referred to the Biological Standards Commission.

The Commission did not agree to a request for additional point in Article 2.6.7.6. requiring virological and serological test, as it is already covered and implied in par 2 of the Article.

The Commission agreed to the modification proposed in point 1 c) of Article 2.6.7.11. which refers to the possibility of distinction between vaccinated and infected pigs.

The Commission did not agree to remove 'since birth' from point 2 of Article 2.6.7.12, while adding conditions of the source of animal was agreed.

The role of wild boars in country or zone free status needs to be clarified. Not much scientific evidence exists to make a choice – for AI it could be argued that the role of migrating birds supports the exclusion of wild animal status in determining the status of country or zone, while in FMD and CSF migration it may be less important than the status of the resident wild animal populations.

Risk assessment may indicate that in general the infection status of the relevant susceptible wild animal populations historically has made the domestic animal populations more exposed, than in countries or zones, where the wild animal populations have been free from the infections.

The science here is however not supportive in all instances in which case it might be necessary to revert to risk management experience or conventional wisdom to decide on the issue.

6.2. Member Country comments on draft Appendix 3.8.8. (surveillance of classical swine fever)

A comment on the use of the RT-PCR test in addition for CSF will be referred to the Biological Standards Commission.

The modifications proposed for point 2 of Article 3.8.8.3. were agreed: the Commission considered that the reference to differential laboratory diagnosis for clinically similar diseases is important.

The Commission considered that a comment regarding free status and wild pig situation on point 1 of Article 3.8.8.5. as well as a comment regarding surveillance in wild pig on point 2 of Article 3.8.8.6. require further clarification.

7. Combined meeting with Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (20 September 2007)

The two Commissions conducted fruitful discussions on aspects reflected in the report and referred reciprocally between the two Commissions for opinion.

The Scientific Commission in addition to the issues already covered in the report raised the difficulty experienced by a member Country to conduct surveillance to declare a country free from Equine Influenza in accordance with Article 2.5.5.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*. The Article describes specific levels of confidence and prevalence rates which are not consistent with Appendix 3.8.1 of the *Code* in which reference to specific levels of confidence and prevalence rates have been deleted to give countries more freedom to plan a surveillance strategy as dictated by the ruling circumstances. It was agreed between the two Commissions that the matter would be referred to the *ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology for an additional opinion.

It was agreed that the two Commissions will exchange issues for discussion and comments prior to the next meeting in February 2008.

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MEETING OF THE

OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION FOR ANIMAL DISEASES

Paris, 18 - 20 September 2007

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Agenda

1. Report of the Meeting of the Bureau of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, 26 May 2007

- Handbook for animal disease surveillance
- Networks for OIE Reference Laboratories for specific diseases
- FMD mission to South America – December 2007

2. Work plan and activities

a) Review of the work plan prepared in July 2006

b) Issues recently addressed/readdressed

- Surveillance for wildlife diseases
- Surveillance for vector-borne diseases and climatic changes
- Surveillance guidelines for bovine brucellosis
- Various BSE issues (Atypical scrapie/BSE, review of *Code* Chapter, Appendices on surveillance and risk assessment, and status evaluation questionnaire)
- Reconstitution of ad hoc Groups on vaccine and vaccine banks/NSP tests – FMD
- *Ad hoc* Group on Swine vesicular disease
- Development of *Code* chapter on small hive beetle

3. Reports of *ad hoc* Groups

a) *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology with invited experts on AI & NCD

- Revised draft Ch 2.7.13 on ND
- Modification of Art 2.1.1.6. (disease list for notification) re ND to be notified
- Suggestions on Ch 2.7.12. on AI (introduction of historical perspective, removal of surveillance requirement, removal of the concept of free establishment, etc. mainly for consistency between two chapters)
- Revised draft App 3.8.X on ND surveillance
- Revised draft App 3.8.9. on AI surveillance (incl. introduction of "Surveillance in wild birds" in Article 3.8.9.3.)
- Recommendation of the use of " *laboratory* which is *approved*" *instead of* "approved laboratory" throughout the *Code*
- Recommendation of defining "clinical surveillance" in App 3.8.1.
- Recommendation of defining "incubation period"

b) *Ad hoc* Group on Antigen and vaccine banks

- *Ad hoc* Group's recommendations on the report of the workshop on vaccine banks held in Pirbright in May 2006

c) *Ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue Network

- Date of next meeting

d) *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology (June)

- Revised draft Ch.2.2.10
- Proposed definitions of "surveillance", "monitoring" and "herd"
- Reconfirmation of its view on "buffer zone"
- Free from CSF and the existence of wild life (how to harmonise this concept among various chapters)
- Compartment for vector borne diseases

e) *Ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology (September)

- General guidelines on the application of epidemiological modelling
- Revised CBPP *Code* Chapter, surveillance guidelines and status evaluation questionnaire
- Addressed Member Country comments on the draft Guidelines Appendix 3.x.x. and Chapter 1.3.5. on zoning and compartmentalisation
- Proposals for a fast track procedure to regain free disease or infection free status following the establishment of a containment zone

f) *Ad hoc* Group on listing diseases

g) *Ad hoc* Group for Country Evaluation for BSE risk (joint report July and September)

- Approval of recommendations of *Ad hoc* Group for BSE status of applicant countries
- Progress of epidemiological situation BSE and achievement of required surveillance points, especially in a small cattle population
- Resolution XXIV, 72nd General Session (Competence of SCAD evaluation recovery of status dossiers)

4. Requests for scientific information

a) Inactivation of FMD virus
b) Inactivation of Newcastle disease virus
c) Safety of semen with regard to equine influenza
d) Country rabies status and bat lyssavirus (Australian Bat Lyssavirus vs. European Bat Lyssavirus)
e) Use of the lactoperoxidase system to inactivate pathogens in milk/dairy products

5. Official disease free status matters

a) Administrative procedures for recovery of free status other than FMD
b) Administrative procedure for recognition of containment zones "fast track"

6. Issues referred to Scientific Commission by Code Commission

a) Member comments on Chapter on Bovine TB
b) Member comments on XXX (to be confirmed)
c) Others

7. Combined meeting with Code Commission (20 September 2007)

8. Other issues

Appendix II

MEETING OF THE

OIE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION FOR ANIMAL DISEASES

Paris, 18 - 20 September 2007

List of participants

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MEETING OF THE
OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY WITH INVITED EXPERTS
FROM *AD HOC* GROUPS ON NEWCASTLE DISEASE, AVIAN INFLUENZA
AND WORKING GROUP ON WILDLIFE DISEASES

Paris, 18 – 19 June 2007

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1. Introduction

Dr Vallat welcomed the group and thanked all the participants for their continuous support to the OIE. Dr Vallat stressed that the aim of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* is primarily to assure sanitary safety of international trade of animals and animal products as well as providing surveillance guidelines to Member Countries. In a meeting of the ad hoc group Newcastle disease virus (NDV) in 2006 the NDV chapter was updated based on the latest scientific information and guidelines for surveillance of the disease were developed. The new standards and surveillance guidelines were developed in parallel with the avian influenza standards and guidelines and this combined group was convened to evaluate whether both chapters and surveillance guidelines are consistent and compatible with each other. Dr Vallat explained the terms of reference and stressed the need for the group:

1. To look at the strategy and consistency between the surveillance Chapters for AI and ND. In particular the need to link the requirements for surveillance is important as countries don't want to duplicate work.

2. To look at the use of ND vaccines in this context.

3. To give the OIE some feedback on the possibility of extending the formal recognition by the OIE to other diseases such as AI and ND; is this feasible or practical?

4. To see if and how the leaflet on the check list for AI compartmentalisation can better incorporated into the more formal OIE documentation.

Dr Vallat emphasized the expected outcome of this group and wished the group much success with its work.

2. Newcastle disease Chapter

The group firstly reviewed the draft Newcastle disease (ND) Chapter 2.7.13 and compared it with the avian influenza (AI) Chapter 2.7.12 agreed at the 2007 AGS. The differences between the two can be explained partly as a result of the changes later introduced into the AI chapter which obviously could not be taken into account during the ND working group (WG) meeting held on October 2006 and January 2007. However, in addition, that group wanted to try to ensure that virulent ND was notified in all birds but that this did not cause unnecessary trade resections. The approach in the *Terrestrial Code* for the introductions should be consistent throughout the *Terrestrial Code* so the group agreed that this should be harmonised by the Terrestrial Animal Health Code Commission (TAHCC).

The group looked at the definitions of poultry in the 2 Chapters and it appeared although the wording was different there was little change in substance apart from the fact that fighting cocks were not mentioned but were covered by the word fowl but the definition of fowl is not present in the *Terrestrial Code*. More importantly backyard poultry used for any purpose, i.e. just kept as pets, is not covered by the AI definition.

For ND: "Poultry is defined as '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'. All backyard and game fowl regardless of use will be defined as poultry.

Birds that are kept in captivity for any reason other than those defined as poultry, including those that are kept for shows, races, exhibitions, competitions, or sale is not considered to be poultry."

For AI: "Poultry is defined as 'all domesticated birds, including backyard poultry, 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, as well as fighting cocks used for any purpose'.

Birds that are kept in captivity for any reason other than those reasons referred to in the preceding paragraph, including those that are kept for shows, races, exhibitions, competitions, breeding or selling these categories of birds as well as pet birds, are not considered to be poultry."

According to the group the word fowl should not be used. There was extensive discussion how to achieve consistency between the two. The OIE was clear that similar definitions would be highly preferable.

It was highlighted that there is a difference in the approach taken in developed countries and less developed countries concerning hobby birds. They can act as important sentinels but if controls are too heavy the owners will not report disease however what is the level of risk in these cases?

There was a proposal to modify the definition of AI in relation to the reference to International trade i.e. to delete it and replace the reference to "poultry" with the word "birds" but this would have to be considered in Article 2.1.1.3 concerning the notification requirements.

There was extensive discussion on these definitions and it was eventually agreed to use the AI definition of poultry for ND as a working solution.

The introduction of the definition of poultry and the differences as regards notifications for specific species laid in Chapter 2.1.1.3 (e.g. for AI) needs to reviewed and agreed by the TAHCC in order to have consistent approach throughout the *Terrestrial Code*.

The group discussed the terminology of vNDV as this appeared to be superfluous. It was argued that it could be simplified by simply referring to the definition or description in Article 2.7.13.1 and then one could just refer to ND virus (NDV). However, it was highlighted that this may not be possible as it would not be clearer in general terms as most countries were used to the current differentiation between virulent strains and the non-virulent ones. In case that any isolate must be typed and its pathogenicity determined. This has to be reflected in the surveillance guidelines. The group also discussed the necessity to delete the word notifiable from the AI Chapter in any case there was no need to include in the ND Chapter. However, it is clear that there only two distinctions for the virus in the ND Chapter (virulent and non-virulent) whereas there are 3 distinctions in the AI Chapter. The word notifiable in the AI Chapter seems to have now been widely accepted.

The group eventually after a long discussion decided to follow the AI Chapter as closely as possible but this would also mean that the disease notification Chapter 2.1.3 concerning ND would have to be amended in the disease list for notification as follows: "Newcastle disease: all vNDV isolates in all birds."

The group agreed to introduce the notion of potential factors concerning the occurrence of the disease and historical perspective rather than risk assessment and the requirements concerning surveillance are no longer required as they are detailed in the surveillance guidelines. The AI chapter should be amended accordingly.

In point 6 of Article 2.7.12.1 there is a reference to a free establishment the group queried why this could not be changed to compartment. It would seem that the only usage would be in Article 2.7.12.8 concerning the import from an HPNAI free country, zone or compartment, Veterinary Authorities for day-old live poultry where the establishment refers to a hatchery. The present wording appears confusing and the group recommends that "establishments" should be replaced by "compartments" in all cases since a compartment can be one or more establishments.

The order of the points was made consistent throughout the Articles e.g. transport condition was put as a last point in all cases. Also the group recommended that the wording appropriately sanitized containers concerning the transport requirements in each commodity section be added in the AI Chapter. The group also felt that for eggs for human consumption and poultry egg products the requirement for new packaging or appropriately sanitised packaging should be added in the AI Chapter. The commodity of hatching eggs from birds other than poultry in Article 2.7.13.9 is not in the AI Chapter and should be included there. There was some discussion on the applicability of vNDV to birds other than poultry but this is solved by the definition of ND in Article 2.7.13.1.

The possibility of certifying that the egg products came from "free flocks" (rather than only processing to destroy the virus) was introduced as has been done for egg products in the AI Chapter. The group felt that the layout and wording for the specific commodities where it refers to "regardless of the ND status" (which has been used only for AI) could be misinterpreted. The Articles were amended and deleted appropriately. This should be reviewed in the AI Chapter.

There was some discussion on adding or keeping a requirement for ante and post mortem inspection and whether this should be included or not for all the commodities. The purpose should be clear: is it for animal health or for food safety purposes or both? Here appears a difference between AI and ND since the former does have human health risks whereas the latter has not. In addition if the treatment of the product was considered safe did it matter if the poultry were infected. The general consensus was to introduce ante and post-mortem inspection for commodities for human consumption but not for others. This is consistent with the other chapters.

In Article 2.7.13.19 the wording "meat and other products from birds other than poultry" should be changed to "products from birds not covered by the other Articles" as when one refers to meat this is already covered in the definition of poultry. The same should be done in the AI Chapter.

3. Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease Surveillance Guidelines

The group reviewed these surveillance guidelines. There was a discussion on the need for surveillance in wildlife since it is expensive capturing wild birds and not always clear what it achieves. Outcomes could be useful in anticipating possible outbreaks in poultry but is not very sensitive. Passive surveillance i.e. looking at dead birds could give some early indication and is more targeted and much cheaper. However it will always still be needed to demonstrate that poultry flocks are free. If wild life surveillance is carried out, it needs to have clear objectives. The reason countries are carrying out surveillance in wild birds is basically for public health and consumer interest. Any possible contact between wild birds and poultry must be considered as a risk and the greater the contacts the greater the risk whether the wild birds are surveyed or not. The present wording in the guidelines concerning surveillance of wild life is sufficiently flexible to cater for a variety of scenarios.

It was agreed to add in Article 3.8.x.1 a reference to the definition of poultry in Chapter 2.7.13 and to delete the reference to low virulence.

It was agreed to reword part of Article 3.8.x.2 so as to avoid using the word application which infers that an application for freedom needs to be submitted to the OIE. Member country status for ND or AI is not currently recognized by the OIE. The same situation pertains to the AI surveillance guidelines which need to be amended accordingly.

The group discussed surveillance when vaccination is carried out extensively and acknowledged that in vaccinated populations sentinels can be useful as virus isolation in these populations may be difficult.

In point 5 of Article 3.8.x.3 it was agreed that sentinels should not be used in broiler flocks. The paragraph was reworded to reflect this. In addition in point 4 of the same Chapter it was clarified that in the light of systematic vaccination serological surveillance was pointless.

An AI outbreak in wildlife should not have any consequences on trade according to the *Terrestrial Code*. This does not mean that surveillance in wild life is not important, what is important is that it does not affect the status of the country for trade. In the case of FMD, disease in wild life will at the moment affect the status of the country. There was extensive discussion on the necessity and or extent of wild life surveillance needed for ND.

The group recommended that a paragraph in Article 3.8.9.3 headed "Surveillance in wild birds" should be included in the AI surveillance guidelines as follows:

"In countries where resources are limited, the primary need of surveillance is to focus on poultry. If for risk assessment or other scientific purposes a surveillance programme is carried out amongst wild birds, the objective of the surveillance shall be clearly defined. Detection of infection especially through targeted sick or dead wild birds, can alert the veterinary services on the possible exposure of free ranging poultry. Early detection of infection can be enhanced if an awareness programme directed to organisations and individuals in close contact with wild populations is in place."

An abbreviated version (due to the decreased risk) was added to the ND guidelines on surveillance.

After the end of the second paragraph the following wording should be added: "Detection of infection especially through surveillance targeting sick or dead wild birds, can alert the veterinary services on the possible exposure of free ranging poultry. Early detection of infection can be enhanced if an awareness programme directed to organisations and individuals in close contact with wild populations is in place".

There was some discussion on the use of the term 'approved laboratories' which is not defined in the *Terrestrial Code* (Chapter 1.1.1); however, *approved* and *laboratory* are. They can be used together instead so the wording "laboratory which is approved" could be used but this is rather cumbersome. However it was felt there was an advantage in laying down in the *Terrestrial Code* a definition for approved laboratory or clarifying further as the definition refers to approval but only for diagnostic test in relation to International trade. This should be looked at for the other Chapters and Appendices as well.

The group discussed what is meant by acceptable level of confidence and it was agreed that this was too vague and should be deleted. In addition the first sentence of the second paragraph of Article 3.8.x.3 was deleted because of the group's discussion on 1) whether a country could be free of disease as opposed to absence of infection and 2) the in exactitude of the wording vis-à-vis "all poultry" which is incorrect as there is no need to include pigeons.

The group suggests that the general principles and surveillance guideline Appendix 3.8.1 should be reviewed in particular not just for countries seeking recognition of freedom but also for those just wishing to introduce or improve their surveillance. This concept was introduced into the introduction of the ND guidelines. The group discussed the problem of self-declaration for those diseases e.g. ND and AI (i.e. not the 4 diseases given a formal status by the OIE) for those countries wanting to demonstrate this to its trading partners. To make this clearer a short text was introduced into the Appendix but this should be done in a horizontal manner throughout. The group felt that throughout the *Terrestrial Code* the words "freedom from disease" and/or "absence of infection" should be standardised and more consistently used.

There was discussion on what was meant by clinical surveillance. This is not in the general surveillance guidelines (Appendix 3.8.1) whereas it is extensively used in the surveillance appendices for the specific diseases. The group recommends that it should be included in the general Appendix.

As the wording under the heading serological surveillance in 4 (b) of unintentional vaccination was unclear it was amended to make an additional point c) "exposure to vaccine virus".

Sentinel birds should be immunologically naive when they are initially used. However, if they are placed with poultry which have been vaccinated with a live vaccine then these sentinels may develop low titres from exposure to the live vaccine. The interpretation of results of serological testing of these sentinels needs careful consideration.

As the references to status and regaining of status are already covered in Articles 2.7.13.2 and 3 it was deleted from the draft surveillance Appendix.

Article 3.8.x.4 in section 2 was amended to avoid repetition and to ensure clarity.

The group discussed if it was necessary to basically repeat the requirements for regaining freedom when this was laid down in the Chapter. However as there was some further explanation it was decided to add the amended last Article as a point 3 to the previous one (Article 3.8.x.4 concerning documentation of ND free status). The consistency of the use of ND and vND was resolved in the guidelines.

The group discussed the need to add references to tests and their interpretation of the results as found in the AI guidelines however the *Manual* is much simpler for ND the addition of such references would not give any added value to the text.

In addition the incubation period laid down appears to be roughly 3 times the period specified in the technical sheets for each disease. Either this should be changed to reflect the actual time period or a different wording should be used and the group recommends the TAHCC to reflect on this as it is extremely important for International trade purposes and possible SPS conflicts.

4. Possibility of granting OIE AI/ND free status to a country

The group discussed the possibility of the OIE giving or being able to give a status of freedom from ND to a country. The problem is that for ND there is less knowledge of the situation in wild birds however it has been reported. One can not ignore the situation in wild birds but it is no where near the same problem as for AI. There needs to be more consistency in the Chapters in particular concerning the effect of disease in wildlife on the status of the country or zone. There is a significant difference between the approach in the AI and FMD chapter concerning wildlife status.

Although countries should be encouraged to move towards freedom for the disease in poultry it was felt that it was very difficult to have a workable way for OIE to establish freedom for ND and AI because of the lack of stability vis-à-vis wild birds and for other reasons such as illegal movements (easier to illegally move birds than bovines), many sectors, different types of husbandry e.g. backyard flocks and biosecurity problems, number of animals, differences in expression of the disease between different species and vaccination problems in some species (lack of immune response) and in particular for AI the ease of global spread of the disease i.e. there are many reasons why it would be difficult for the OIE to manage the status of freedom for AI and ND.

The group understands that it is increasingly difficult for the OIE to recognise countries or zones free of diseases and therefore recommends that the OIE does not extend their disease recognition status to include AI or ND. Instead the OIE should encourage its member countries to use the concept of compartmentalisation.

5. Check list for AI compartmentalisation

The group discussed to handle the checklist to give it more visibility as many countries expected this but to incorporate it into the *Terrestrial Code* could be difficult and be a lengthy procedure. The group suggested that at the moment it should not be included in the *Terrestrial Code* but should be more visible by a direct link from the proposed Appendix on guidelines for compartmentalisation and the OIE should try to get some feedback from member countries to possibly improve the document. In the future rather than disease by disease may need a commodity approach.

…/Appendices

Appendix I

MEETING OF THE
OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY WITH INVITED EXPERTS
FROM *AD HOC* GROUPS ON NEWCASTLE DISEASE, AVIAN INFLUENZA
AND WORKING GROUP ON WILDLIFE DISEASES

Paris, 18 – 19 June 2007

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Agenda

1. Adoption of agenda and appointment of rapporteur

2. Approval of terms of reference for the meeting

3. Review of the revisions on the chapter and surveillance guidelines and vaccination strategies for avian influenza and Newcastle disease

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Appendix II

MEETING OF THE

OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY WITH INVITED EXPERTS

FROM *AD HOC* GROUPS ON NEWCASTLE DISEASE, AVIAN INFLUENZA

AND WORKING GROUP ON WILDLIFE DISEASES

Paris, 18 – 19 June 2007

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List of participants

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Appendix IV

Original: English
March 2007

REPORT OF THE MEETING

OF THE OIE AD HOC GROUP ON BLUETONGUE REFERENCE LABORATORY NETWORKS

Civitella del Tronto, Teramo Italy, 12 – 14 March 2007

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Following the recommendation of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue at OIE headquarters in Paris on 20 October 2006, the OIE has decided to establish a network of OIE bluetongue Reference Laboratories. A first meeting of the network was held in Civitella del Tronto, Teramo (Italy), from 12 to 14 March 2007. Representatives of the five OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories, three OIE Collaborating Centres, *ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue and OIE Central Bureau, participated to the meeting and agreed on the network's terms of references reported in the Annex I.

Dr Gideon Brückner, Head of the Scientific and Technical Department welcomed the participants on behalf of Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE and explained the purpose of the meeting. He emphasised the support of the OIE for the establishment of such network of experts and indicated that the outcome of the meeting could also serve as a model for the establishment of networks between OIE Reference Laboratories for other OIE listed diseases.

The meeting was chaired by Prof Vincenzo Caporale, President of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases.

The agenda of the meeting and list of participants are presented in Appendices I and II respectively.

1. Terms of reference of a network of OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories

The terms of reference (Appendix III) were introduced by Prof. Caporale and discussed in length.

It was agreed that the implementation of a worldwide network of OIE Bluetongue (BT) Reference Laboratories contributes to improve the knowledge of BT epidemiological situation and supports the development of a wider global BT surveillance network. The network will also be an asset of the OIE-WAHIS system as it can provide additional data and analysis increasing the efficacy of the system as a tool for international animal disease control.

These initiatives will facilitate international trade of animal and the improvement of BT control measures. The Group agreed that the following objectives are inherent to the implementation of the proposed network:

- To make available and exchange diagnostic material, harmonize, standardize and validate diagnostic tests including those for the BTV genomic sequencing and contributing to a worldwide data bank on BTV genomic mapping as well as vector characterization;

- To assist national reference laboratories in relation to BT diagnosis, BTV and vectors identification;

- To provide expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to BT diagnosis, surveillance and control;

- To provide entomological expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to *Culicoides* identification and surveillance;

- To collect, analyse and disseminate epidemiological information under the auspices of the OIE headquarters on BT global occurrence and spread as well as on BTV typing and genetic characterization and on BT vectors presence and abundance. This also will be used to complement OIE WAHIS and WAHID mechanisms.

2. Overview of activities related to bluetongue currently conducted at OIE Reference and related national laboratories

Presentations were made by representatives from the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (South Africa); the Diagnostic Virology Laboratory, NVSL, Ames, Iowa, USA; the Intituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G.Caporale', Teramo, Italy; the CSIRO, Australian Animal health Laboratory (AAHL), Geelong, Victoria, Australia; the Insitute for Animal Health, Pirbright Laboratory, Surrey, United Kingdom; CIRAD-EMVT, Montferriez sur Lez, Montpellier, France; Prof A Shimsony, Israel and Kyushu Research Station, Chuzan, Kagoshima, Japan.

The presentations were supplemented by a presentation on the surveillance network for bluetongue in the Eastern and Balkan Regions initiated by the OIE reference Laboratory at Teramo, Italy.

3. Discussions on future collaboration and management of the network

The Group discussed in detail the working plan for the implementation of a web-based network of OIE Bluetongue reference Laboratories, the integration of collected data on virus circulation, vector distribution and ecology within the WAHIS and the integration of existing databases on BTV isolates and their generic characterisation within the WAHIS.

It was recommended and agreed that in respect of the availability of diagnostic reference materials, biological reference products and other reagents that:

- Participating laboratories would advise each other of their reference strains and antisera– provenance, passage history, amounts available, list of new field isolates and antisera and to validate if there are any changes compared to the old South African reference strains. This was identified as a future collaborative program.

- A protocol for maintenance of reference strains shall be developed and agreed, both for wild type virus and reagent virus.

- Each laboratory will be responsible for producing a volume of standard virus and standard reference antiserum for 5 viral serotypes.

- A protocol for antiserum production should be developed and agreed upon.

- International standardization of *Culicoides* speciation should be developed, together with standard reference specimens and information material for vector species.

In respect of the need to harmonise diagnostic protocols it was agreed that:

- Participating laboratories would advise each other of their diagnostic strategy and test methods for virus isolation, C-ELISA, RT-PCR, vector collections and catch analysis.

- Explore the possibility of virology and serology ring trials to ensure harmonization between OIE bluetongue Reference Laboratories.

- Reference laboratories should be involved in the supply of proficiency testing to client laboratories, including development of proficiency testing for molecular diagnostics.

- The use of OIE guidelines and templates for test validation should be encouraged and that reference Laboratories should help to maintain panels of test materials for test validation.

It was agreed that the OIE Reference Laboratory at Teramo would take responsibility for managing the network and the website for the first period of 3 years.

Following the meeting the technical specifications for the OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories Network (OIE-BT-LabNet) was finalised in collaboration with OIE (Appendix III).

The next meeting of the ad hoc Group will be in March 2008.

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…/Appendices

Appendix I

MEETING OF THE

AD HOC GROUP ON BLUETONGUE

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NETWORK OF OIE BLUETONGUE REFERENCE LABORATORIES

Civitella del Tronto, Italy 12-14 March 2007

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Agenda

Monday, 12 March 2007

Morning

1. Welcome (Caporale)

2. Objectives of the meeting. Presentation of the proposed terms of reference of the network of OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories (Caporale)

3. Presentation of OIE-WAHIS system with particular reference to the information and applications relevant for the network (Petrini)

Afternoon

4. Presentation of activities performed by OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories and resources available
   Chair: Gideon Bruckner

   a. Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute, Onderstepoort , South Africa
   b. Diagnostic Virology Laboratory, National Veterinary Services Laboratories, Ames, Iowa, United States of America
   c. Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale', Teramo, Italy
   d. CSIRO, Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL), Geelong, Victoria, Australia
   e. Institute for Animal Health, Pirbright Laboratory, Pirbright, Surrey, United Kingdom
   f. Prof. A. Shimshony, Israel. *Ad hoc* OIE group on bluetongue
   g. CIRAD-EMVT, Montferriez sur Lez, Montpellier, France
   h. Kyushu Research Station, Chuzan, Kagoshima, Japan

Tuesday, 13 March 2007

Morning

1. Presentation of the surveillance network for Bluetongue in the Eastern and Balkan Regions (Calistri)

2. Working plan for the implementation of the web-based network of OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories (part I):
   Chairs: Vincenzo Caporale / Donna Johnson

   a. ToRs objectives #1

      1. To collect, analyse and disseminate epidemiological information under the auspices of the OIE headquarters on BT global occurrence and spread as well as on BTV typing and genetic characterization and on BT vectors presence and abundance.

In particular the following topics shall be discussed:

i. Implementation of databases on virus circulation and vector distribution
ii. Implementation of databases on antigenic and genetic characterization of BTV
iii. Role of environment in the BT diffusion
iv. Establishment of a GIS based system for collection and representation of all the above information

3. Conclusions

Afternoon

4. Working plan for the implementation of the web-based network of OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories (part II):
Chairs: Geltrude H. Gerdes / Giovanni Savini / Renaud Lancelot

a. ToRs objectives #4. and #5.

4. To make available and exchange diagnostic material, harmonize, standardize and validate diagnostic tests including those for the BTV genomic sequencing and contributing to a worldwide date bank on BTV genomic mapping as well as vector chracterization.

5. To assist national reference laboratories in relation to BT diagnosis, BTV and vectors identification.

In particular the following topics shall be discussed:

i. Availability of diagnostic reference materials, biological reference products and other reagents
ii. Development of diagnostic protocols
iii. Tests validation

5. Conclusions
6. Visit to the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale' - TERAMO

Wednesday, 14 March 2007

Morning

7. Training and expertise:
Chairs: Chris Oura / Peter Daniels

a. ToRs objectives #2 and #3.

2. To provide expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to BT diagnosis, surveillance and control.
3. To provide entomological expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to Culicoides identification and surveillance.

In particular the following topics shall be discussed:

i. The list of BT experts and their field of expertise
ii. Web access to document resources (ppt presentations, publications, etc.)
iii. Development of discussion forum on BT

8. Conclusions
9. Future activities and collaborative projects (Bruckner / Caporale)
10. General Conclusions and Recommendations (Bruckner / Caporale)

Appendix II

MEETING OF THE

AD HOC GROUP ON BLUETONGUE

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NETWORK OF OIE BLUETONGUE REFERENCE LABORATORIES

Civitella del Tronto, Italy 12-14 March 2007

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Appendix III

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3. ANNEX I 35

OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories Network (OIE-BT-LabNt)

Technical specifications

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1. Introduction

Following the recommendation of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue at OIE headquarters in Paris on 20 October 2006, the OIE has decided to establish a network of OIE bluetongue Reference Laboratories. A first meeting of the network was held in Civitella del Tronto, Teramo (Italy), from 12 to 14 March 2007. Representatives of the five OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories, three OIE Collaborating Centres, *ad hoc* Group on Bluetongue and OIE Central Bureau, participated to the meeting and agreed on the network's terms of references reported in the Annex I.

The network of OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories is going to be an asset of the OIE's world animal health information system (WAHIS) and world animal health information database (WAHID). It will provide additional information to improve the knowledge of the bluetongue (BT) epidemiological situation and to increase the efficacy of WAHIS as a tool for international animal disease control.

A web-based system for the network shall be developed to share and make available laboratory and epidemiological information, including BTV strain genetic characterization (sequences). The web-based system (referred as "**OIE-BT-LabNet**" in the rest of the document), strictly linked to WAHIS and WAHID, will work as reference point for retrieving and exchanging relevant data on BT epidemiological situation. It will include a GIS approach to facilitate the representation of BTV and vectors global distribution. It will be handed by a Secretariat under the supervision of the OIE Central Bureau. The Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale' (IZSA&M) will manage the Secretariat for the first two years.

The IZSA&M has already developed a BT surveillance network in the framework of the project "Cooperation for implementing a surveillance network for bluetongue in the Balkan region (East-BTNet)" (http://www.east-btnet.izs.it/index.htm) in collaboration with the Veterinary Services and National Veterinary Institutes of: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Malta, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia and Turkey. Therefore, the already existing GIS systems for BT data collection and analysis (e.g. East-BTNet) shall be used as reference for the development of the new OIE-BT-LabNet system.

Furthermore, the IZSA&M has been appointed by the European Commission to establish an European web-based surveillance network to collect, store, and analyse BT surveillance data (EU-BTNET). This European network shall collect and make available all relevant epidemiological information on BT occurrence and surveillance in EU, in order to facilitate intra-community trade of live animals belonging to species susceptible to bluetongue infection.

IZSA&M, therefore, will guarantee the coherence between the two systems (OIE-BT-LabNet and EU-BTNET), thus to facilitate the automatic exchange of data between OIE and EU in the early future. In particular, EU-BTNET is structured to collect and store data deriving from both EU animal diseases notification system (ADNS) and WAHIS, and common standards for data registration have been defined within EU-BTNET. It will enhance a better communication between the two international systems, giving the possibility to automatically transfer data on BT, and other diseases, outbreaks from ADNS to WAHIS, avoiding double notifications and data typing by EU Member States.

The main technical specification of the OIE-BT-LabNet system are presented in the present document, with an exhaustive description of the following aspects:

- structure of OIE-BT-LabNet system,
- data inputs and outputs,
- rules for accessing to the system.

2. Components of the system

The OIE-BT-LabNet website will be developed under oie.int domain. It is proposed to create a dedicated sub-domain with the following address: www.btlab.oie.int. All website contents shall be subjected to OIE Central Bureau approval and must follow the OIE rules for the graphic layouts on the web.

The main components of OIE-BT-LabNet system are as follows:

a) Members area. It will be constituted by a forum area and by a documents repository for the exchange of technical and scientific documents among network's participant.

b) Informative area. It will be open for public access and it will contain informative material for OIE Member Countries and general public.

c) Epidemiological area. It will be the core of the OIE-BT-LabNet system, where data regarding BTV occurrence, BTV surveillance and control activities as well as BTV strains, including their genetic sequence, will be made available.

2.1. Members area

The access to this area is reserved to the members of the network, and, therefore, username and password will be required to get access to the area. Two main sections are included in this restricted area:

- Discussion forum. In this section, users via a web-based message system can share ideas, questions and problems on BT. Users can read all messages sent to the forum. Discussion groups can be created for specific topics.
- Documents repository. A database for storing and exchanging documents among network members will be instituted. Each document will be indexed through the use of a set of keywords for its quick retrieval. The documents archive will collect:
    - scientific and technical papers produced by the participants or any other valuable papers,
    - laboratory protocols and other technical documents related to reagents, biological and reference strains production and storing,
    - training and informative material (videos, presentations, leaflets, reports, guidelines, posters, etc.).

2.2. Informative area

The informative area will make available for the general public and OIE Member Countries the following information:

- List of diagnostic and technical assistance services offered by the OIE bluetongue reference laboratories, contact details and procedures to be followed to access to these services. Clear instructions will be presented on where diagnostic and biological materials are available and how they can be ordered.
- Leaflets, guidelines and other informative documents approved by OIE Central Bureau for public diffusion. The annual report to be prepared by the participants to the network will be also made available, after OIE Central Bureau approval.
- Bluetongue "Latest News" service, through which the registered subscribers will be weekly informed about the recent news on bluetongue published on the web (in English, Spanish or French) by e-mail or a RSS feed service.
- Links to web pages of interest and to official documents published and made available on the internet by other Institutions.

2.3. Epidemiological area

2.3.1. General description

The conceptual framework of the epidemiological area of the system is shown in Figure 1. In particular, three main modules will be developed:

- BTV occurrence. It collects data on BTV outbreaks and BTV serotypes distribution.
- BTV surveillance/control. It collects information regarding the serological and entomological surveillance activities and vaccinations carried out in the Countries.
- BTV strains. It collects data on BTV strains isolated and, when available, on their genetic sequences.

The WAHIS will be the central node of the system (see Figure 1), where all epidemiological data are stored. In fact, the information regarding BTV occurrence, entomological and serological surveillance activities as well as on vaccinations will be officially provided by OIE Member Countries official delegates through specific forms in WAHID system. After the validation process foreseen by OIE rules, all this information will be made openly and publicly available into the epidemiological area of OIE-BT-LabNet system.

Regarding the data on BTV strains, they can be hardly provided by the OIE's delegates, given the particular technical nature of this type of information. On the contrary, OIE BT Reference Laboratories and National Reference Laboratories may provide such information and derive valuable benefits from the tools for strains comparison and phylogenetic analysis. Therefore, OIE and national reference laboratories will provide, through the OIE-BT-LabNet system, the data regarding isolated BTV strains and their genetic sequence. The access to these data will be restricted to registered users only, given the un-official nature of this information.

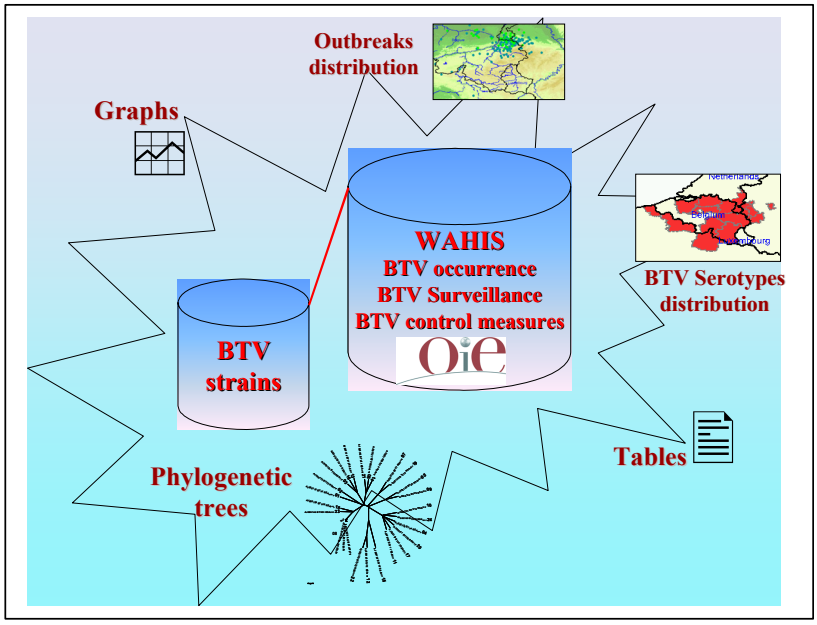

Figure 1.: Conceptual framework of the epidemiological area of the OIE-BT-LabNet system.

2.3.2. BTV occurrence module

Data on BTV outbreaks and BTV occurrence (aggregated data for administrative divisions/countries, and for time period) are displayed in the BTV occurrence module.

The geographical distribution of BT infection will be presented according to the outbreaks localization, when the information for each single outbreak and its geographical coordinates will be available (Figure 2).

The geographical distribution of BTV serotypes will be presented also through thematic maps, aggregating outbreaks information by administrative divisions/countries and time period (monthly, six-monthly). Data derived from WAHIS'six-monthly reports will be also shown through this type of maps (Figure 3).

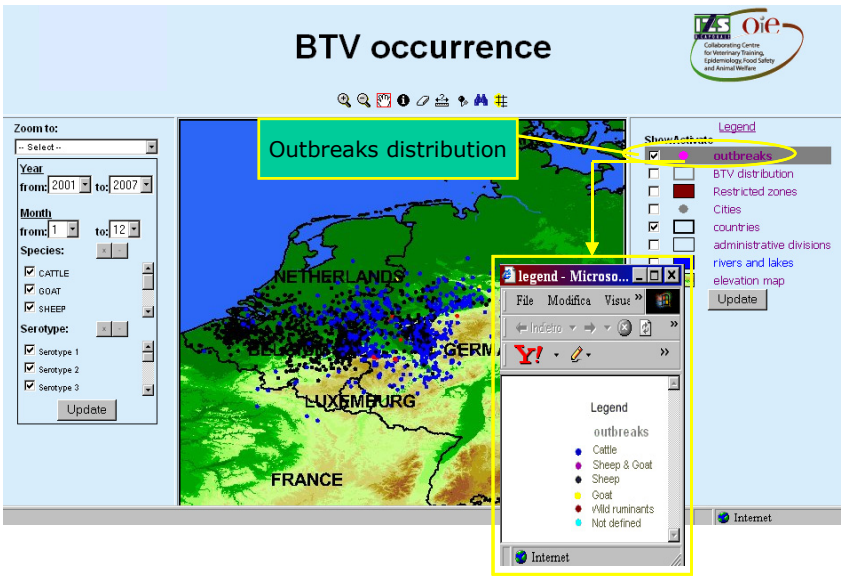

Figure 2.: Geographical representation of outbreaks distribution.

At least the following data shall be collected from the WAHIS for outbreaks representation:

- Disease code
- Nature of Diagnosis
- First administrative division affected
- Year
- Reason for notification
- Report date
- Serial number of outbreak (if any, optional)
- Serotype (it can be a number in the range 1 to 24, or "provisionally unknown" in the case typing tests are ongoing)
- Latitude
- Longitude
- Date of start of the event
- Date of confirmation of event
- Outbreak status
- Epidemiological Unit type
- For each Species
    - No. of susceptible animals in the outbreak
    - No. of cases
    - No. of deaths
    - No. of destroyed
    - No. of slaughtered
- Control measures applied
- Source of infection
- Laboratory(ies)
- List of diagnostic tests used by laboratory(ies)

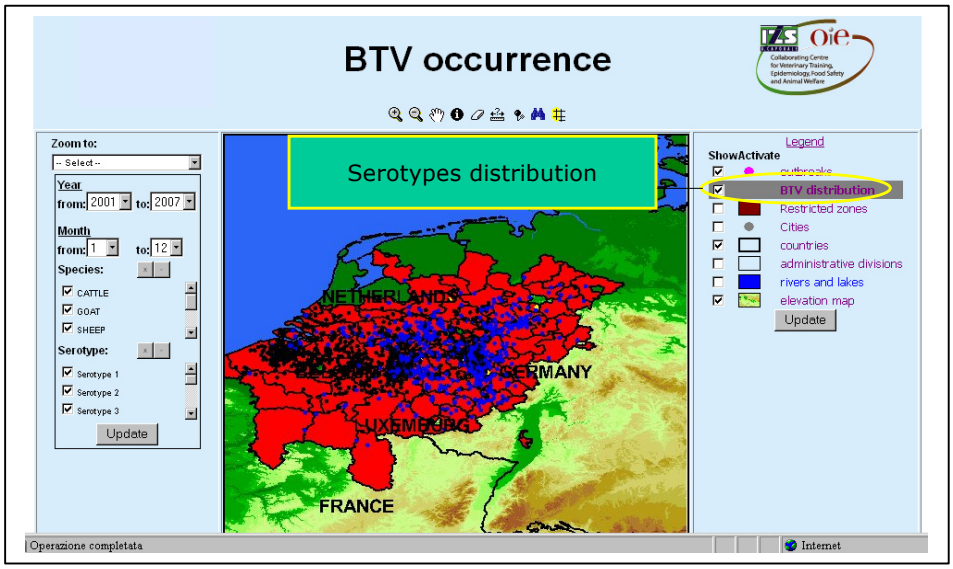

Figure 3.: Geographical representation of BTV serotypes distribution.

The information regarding the serotype involved and the geographical coordinates of the outbreak are particularly important for maps creation.

The occurrence of BT infection will be presented and summarised by maps, tables and graphs:

- Maps. Several tools will be available for retrieving and inquiring data (query options, selections, identify tools) and to create buffers.
- Tables. The number of outbreaks will be summarised in tables, according to the serotypes involved, animal species and countries affected.
- Graphs. The weekly distribution of the number of outbreaks will be presented through graphs, according to the serotypes involved, animal species and country affected.

2.3.3. BTV surveillance/control module

Information regarding the serological/entomological surveillance activities and vaccinations carried out in the countries will be displayed within the BTV surveillance/control module.

The geographical distribution of *Culicoides* vectors will be presented for each catching site. Whereas, the geographical distribution of the serological/virological surveillance activities and their results, will be visualised through thematic maps, aggregating such information by administrative divisions/countries and time period (monthly, six-monthly).

Geographical representation of vaccination activities (both in term of absolute number of vaccinated animals and as percentage of vaccinated population) will be shown through thematic maps, in which data is aggregated by administrative divisions/countries and time period (six-monthly).

The following data on serological/virological surveillance shall be collected (* mandatory):

- Disease code*
- Administrative division*
- Animal species tested*
- Type of surveillance system scheme* ("sentinel system" and/or "periodical survey")
- Type of diagnostic tests performed* (ELISA, Serum-neutralisation, PCR, virus isolation)
- Year*
- Month*
- Number of tested animals *
- Number of positive animals *
- Serotype serologically or virologically determined (data to be provided in case of positive results to serum-neutralization or virus isolation tests)

The following data on entomological surveillance shall be collected (* mandatory):

- Administrative division*
- Site unique id* (an unique code for each trapping site)
- Catch date*
- Latitude*
- Longitude*
- Total number of *Culicoides* spp. collected
- Number of *Culicoides* of a given species or complex collected[1]

[1] A comprehensive list of *Culicoides* species and/or complexes is prepared in order to permit the registration of the number insects collected for each *Culicoides* species and/or complex.

The following data on vaccination activities shall be collected (* mandatory):

- Disease code*
- Year*
- Period of reference* (Jan-Jun / Jul-Dec)
- Type of vaccine and serotype combination*
- Animal species vaccinated*
- Type of vaccination campaign * ("vaccination of young animals" or "mass vaccination")
- Total number of animals under the programme*
- Number of vaccinated animal by first administrative division/in the country*

The information regarding surveillance and control activities will be presented in maps and summarised in tables.

2.3.4. BTV strains module

The information regarding isolated BTV strains and their genetic sequences will be made available through a dedicated section of the OIE-BT-LabNet website. For exceptional events in relation with bluetongue, results of BTV strains information will be related to the data of laboratory results stored in WAHIS database. Applications for reporting strains data and to build phylogenetic trees shall be developed.

…/Annex

ANNEX I

OIE Bluetongue Reference Laboratories Network

Terms of reference

PURPOSE

The implementation of a worldwide network of OIE Bluetongue (BT) Reference Laboratories contributes to improve the knowledge of BT epidemiological situation and supports the development of a wider global BT surveillance network.

The network will be an asset of the OIE-WAHIS system as it can provide additional data and analysis increasing the efficacy of the system as a tool for international animal disease control.

These initiatives will facilitate international trade of animal and the improvement of BT control measures.

OBJECTIVES

1. To make available and exchange diagnostic material, harmonize, standardize and validate diagnostic tests including those for the BTV genomic sequencing and contributing to a worldwide data bank on BTV genomic mapping as well as vector characterization;

2. To assist national reference laboratories in relation to BT diagnosis, BTV and vectors identification;

3. To provide expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to BT diagnosis, surveillance and control;

4. To provide entomological expertise and training to OIE and OIE Member Countries in relation to *Culicoides* identification and surveillance;

5. To collect, analyse and disseminate epidemiological information under the auspices of the OIE headquarters on BT global occurrence and spread as well as on BTV typing and genetic characterization and on BT vectors presence and abundance. This also will be used to complement OIE WAHIS and WAHID mechanisms.

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The network will be expanded, as far as possible, to include Bluetongue National Reference Laboratories and other highly competent laboratories so as to create the widest possible worldwide network.

ACTIVITIES

The network will:

1. Collect, characterise (antigenically and genetically), store BT viruses representing the global diversity of strains;
2. Exchange and diagnostic reference materials and related information;
3. Facilitate training and scientific exchange on BT surveillance and control activities.
4. Maintain a database of BT and *Culicoides* experts and their field of expertise.
5. Develop diagnostic protocols for BTV and *Culicoides* surveillance.
6. Support national reference laboratories, distributing biological reference products and any other reagents used in BT diagnosis and control.
7. Provide information to the OIE through the worldwide web-based BT information network integrated with the OIE-WAHIS under the auspices of the OIE headquarters.
8. Provide OIE with an annual report on the situation of BT worldwide and activities performed by the participants to the network.
9. Identify research requirements and where appropriate develop joint research projects.
10. Encourage twinning projects with laboratories in developing countries

COORDINATION

Secretariat

A secretariat is needed to organize the periodical meetings (at least one annual meeting must be held) and to establish and maintain the web-based network system (see below). The Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise 'G. Caporale' (IZSAM) will manage the Secretariat for the first two years. It will rotate every two years.

Web-based network system

A web-based system for the network must be developed to share and make available laboratory and epidemiological information including BTV strain genetic characterization (sequences). The web-based system shall collect all relevant data produced by the participants to the network and it will work as reference point for retrieving and exchanging relevant data on BT epidemiological situation. It will include a GIS approach to facilitate the representation of BTV and vectors global distribution. It will be handed by Secretariat in collaboration with OIE Central Bureau.

STEERING COMMITTEE

It is proposed that a Steering Committee should be established and be composed by the OIE Central Bureau and of each OIE BT Reference laboratories and participating Collaborating Centres.

The terms of reference for the steering committee should comprise:

1. Decide on work programs
2. Review priorities, organisational relationships and progress of the Network.
3. Seek funding for Network activities.
4. Resolve disagreements between network members.

Appendix V

Original: English
June 2007

MEETING OF THE OIE AD HOC GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY

Paris, 20 - 22 June 2007

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The meeting of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases was held at OIE Headquarters, Paris from 20-22 June 2007. The meeting was chaired by Professor Vincenzo Caporale, President of the Scientific Commission. Dr Cristobal Zepeda and Dr Howard Batho acted as rapporteurs.

The agenda and list of participants are presented as Appendices I and II, respectively.

Dr Bernard Vallat, Director General of the OIE, welcomed the group and thanked all the participants for their support to the OIE. He explained the terms of reference and stressed the need for the group:

- To review the definition of containment zone with regard to numbers of outbreaks with specific reference to foot and mouth disease (FMD) with the priority to finalise the *Terrestrial Code* chapter.

- To review country comments on the revised version of Chapter 1.3.5. on zoning and compartmentalisation. It should be considered that when it is possible to have a compartment for avian influenza i.e. bird proof. why not for bluetongue and African horse sickness i.e. insect proof?

- To discuss compartmentalisation: Can countries be declared free if disease is present in wildlife? There is a need for consistency in the approach of the *Terrestrial Code* for avian influenza, classical swine fever and FMD.

- To review the proposed changes in the *Terrestrial Code* chapter, surveillance guidelines and questionnaire for the evaluation of country status for contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP). The Group should consider the documentation from an *ad hoc* Group on CBPP which met in October 2006.

- To look at the consistency of time frames for BSE surveillance in the questionnaire and the disease specific Code chapter and Appendices.

- To propose a definition of *herd* for inclusion in the *Terrestrial Code*

- To review the current definitions for *surveillance* and *monitoring*.

- To consider guidelines for surveillance in wildlife and vector borne diseases.

Following the introductory remarks by Dr Vallat, there was a general discussion on compartmentalisation. The Group considered it as a very important concept for all Member Countries and questioned if all diseases should be encompassed in this concept. Credibility of a compartment system was identified as of critical importance and it might be advisable to start with so called “easier diseases” than vector borne diseases but scientifically there should be no reason why compartmentalisation could not cover all diseases. It was reiterated that AI centres and Quarantine stations as currently defined in the *Terrestrial Code*, are in fact compartments. More detailed discussion was however required to be undertaken by the Group on this concept.

1. Review of definition of containment zone with regard to numbers of outbreaks in particular concerning FMD

In considering if stamping out should be necessarily applied in a *containment zone*, the Group concluded that the general application of the concept of a *containment zone* should be that a country can regain its status when it has been demonstrated that the outbreaks within the *containment zone* have been controlled. This can be achieved either by stamping out or other means including vaccination.

The criteria to define a limited incursion were reviewed to clarify the stability of the situation. The need to have animal identification of the susceptible population in the *containment zone* and the need to demonstrate stability by reference to the incubation period of the disease (in this case FMD) was added. The Group concluded that some limits in the size and extent of the outbreaks should be included and the results of the epidemiological enquiries and the linkage to clustering were therefore incorporated to help defining the containment zone.

Clustering is defined as follows: *means a closely grouped series of events or cases of disease or other health related phenomena with well defined distribution patterns in relation to time or place or both* [ref: A dictionary of epidemiology (4th edition) edited by John M. Last].

The Group recommended that this proposed definition should be added to the *Terrestrial Code* Chapter 1.1.1 on General Definitions.

As it was not always possible to identify the sources of outbreaks, it should therefore not in itself be a limiting factor in the establishment of containment zones.

The Group agreed that the concept of *containment zone* should be included in Chapter 1.3.5 (zoning and compartmentalisation) for application to diseases other than only FMD even though as with compartmentalisation, the application of a *containment zone* may not be applicable to all diseases.

The Group recommended that the OIE should develop an administrative procedure by which a country declaring a containment zone can have a "fast track" recognition of this disease-free status.

2. Surveillance and monitoring (definitions)

In discussing the current definitions for surveillance and monitoring, the Group concluded that the main difference was the action or possible action that might be taken and perhaps the periodicity. The team examined 2 scenarios which might help shed light on this and concluded that m*onitoring* is used to establish a baseline on disease occurrence without any specific action linked while s*urveillance* necessarily implies an action upon a positive finding.

Monitoring is currently defined in Chapter 1.1.1 as: "means the continuous investigation of a given population or subpopulation, and its environment, to detect changes in the prevalence of a disease or characteristics of a pathogenic agent".

The Group recommended that it should be changed to *"means the intermittent performance and analysis of routine measurements, aimed at changes in the environment or health status of the population"* [ref A dictionary of epidemiology (4th edition) edited by John M. Last] to be consistent with the decision below on surveillance.

Surveillance is currently defined in Chapter 1.1.1 as: "*means the investigation of a given population or subpopulation to detect the presence of a pathogenic agent or disease; the frequency and type of surveillance will be determined by the epidemiology of the pathogenic agent or disease, and the desired outputs".*

In Appendix 3.8.1 of the *Terrestrial Code,* surveillance is defined as : *"means the systematic ongoing collection, collation, and analysis of data, and the timely dissemination of information to those who need to know so that action can be taken".*

The Group recommended that the definition in Appendix 3.8.1 should replace the one in the definition Chapter 1.1.1

3. Definition of herd

The Group recommended that the definition in the Meriam-Webster online dictionary *"a number of animals of one kind kept together under human control or a congregation of gregarious wild animals*" should be inserted into the *Terrestrial Code* (Article 1.1.1) but the definition of a herd really means an epidemiological unit and therefore this should be added.

The Group therefore recommends the following definition for inclusion in Chapter 1.1.1:

> "Herd - *means a number of animals of one kind kept together under human control or a congregation of gregarious wild animals. For the purposes of the Code a herd or flock is usually regarded as an epidemiological unit".*

4. Buffer zone

The Group re-examined this concept and could not find any reason to change its opinion and recommendations for the FMD Chapter as noted in the report of the *ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology held from 5-8 September 2006.

The modifications to the FMD chapter adopted in the last General Session include:

> *Susceptible animals in the FMD free country where vaccination is practised [or not practised] should be separated from neighbouring infected countries by a buffer zone or by physical/geographical barriers, and animal health measures that effectively prevent the entry of the virus should be implemented.*

The need to have a buffer zone between infected and non-infected and free countries should be kept optional. The group reiterated that as a result of these changes to Articles 2.2.10.4 and 2.2.10.5 (which did not take account of the recommendations of the *ad hoc* Group) for the declaration of freedom from FMD for 2008, all the countries and zones bordering countries or zones not declared free must give proof of having a buffer zone (or physical or geographical barrier). This also seems to apply when the neighbouring country is vaccinating. This implies that the FMD free health status of countries and zone neighbouring infected and/or vaccinating countries should therefore be reviewed.

5. Classical swine fever (CSF)

The Group discussed whether a country can be declared free if the infection is present in wildlife. The example of CSF in wild boars was used as the CSF chapter requires the application of zoning and/or compartmentalization to manage the infection in wild boars, but a country could still be declared free. This same status is not granted in the case of FMD. For AI, countries can be free in poultry, while wild birds are infected.

The Group concluded that there is no coherence based on science in many of the Chapters on this concept e.g. FMD, AI, CSF, tuberculosis and bovine Brucellosis.

There are differences between CSF and AI in the wild population as all wild bird populations are the natural reservoirs of AI and therefore it is not possible to grant freedom of disease in the wild birds. However a country could be considered free in the domestic poultry.

In addition if the concept of freedom in domestic populations with infection in wild populations were to be extended to other diseases, then if this was applied to FMD for example, then it would be logical to say that a country could be free in its domestic population even if the disease was present in the wild game population.

A harmonized approach for future application would require prior endorsement by the International Committee as there are many significant practical implications.

6. Bluetongue and African horse sickness (AHS) - compartmentalisation

The Group agreed that the critical issue is whether it is possible to have absolute safe insect proofing. The Group considered whether it was in practice more difficult to ensure an establishment is virus proof than vector proof i.e. comparing the situation with avian influenza and bluetongue. The requirements of the Chapters concerning bluetongue, AHS, semen collection and quarantine centres were evaluated to establish a baseline reference. In Article 2.2.13.8 (bluetongue) protection from Culicoides for 60 days (not just in a quarantine station) is required thus implying the use of compartmentalisation. However, in Article 2.5.14.8 (AHS) dealing with an AHS infected country or zone, there is only a reference to the use of a quarantine station which is equivalent to a compartment according to the definition of a quarantine station.

The same measures that can be applied to enable the export from countries not free from AHS or BT according to these 2 articles, ensures protection from vectors during a prescribed pre-export period. This can be applied in other approved and supervised facilities (compartments) which are vector proof in relation to the susceptible animals for either of these diseases.

7. Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP)

The Chapter, the surveillance guidelines and the questionnaire should be based on the revised Rinderpest documents. The Group will consider it at its next meeting and suggested that an expert on CBPP be invited to attend the meeting.

8. Future work

Surveillance in wildlife

The Group discussed two possibilities to either add surveillance guidelines on wildlife to the general surveillance Appendix 3.8.1. or to have a specific Appendix on wildlife surveillance. It might also be considered to add a section in each of the Appendices for the specific disease although this may need to be expanded to other diseases. In order to proceed with this work at least one wildlife expert should be included into the Group for that purpose.

Surveillance for vector borne diseases

Discussions postponed to the next meeting.

Ad hoc Group on climatic changes

Discussions postponed to the next meeting The Group agreed that this topic needs the input of a variety of different experts covering climate, insects veterinary and other areas. A brainstorming group with experts would be useful with the inclusion of inputs from WHO and FAO.

Epidemiological modelling

Discussions postponed to the next meeting.

…/Appendices

Appendix I

MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY

Paris, 20 – 22 June 2007

Agenda

1. **Adoption of agenda and appointment of rapporteur**
2. **Containment zone:**
   a. Review definition in respect to numbers of outbreaks
   b. Application of stamping-out procedures
   c. Application of the concept to other diseases
3. **Definition of the terms "surveillance" and "monitoring"**
4. **Definition of "herd"**
5. **The definition/application of buffer zones as related to the *Terrestrial Code* chapter FMD**
6. **Compartmentalisation: Including or excluding the presence of wildlife vectors e.g. approach in accordance to FMD or avian influenza chapters of the *Terrestrial Code***
7. **Compartmentalisation for bluetongue and African horse sickness**
8. **Review of the revisions on the Chapter, surveillance guidelines and questionnaire for the evaluation of country status for CBPP**
9. **Future working schedule and priority issues for *ad hoc* Group:**
   a. Surveillance in wildlife
   b. Surveillance for vector borne diseases
   c. *Ad hoc* Group on climatic changes
   d. Epidemiological modelling

Appendix II

MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY WITH INVITED EXPERTS
MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY
Paris, 20 – 22 June 2007

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Appendix VI

Original: English
September 2007

MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY

Paris, 5-7 September 2007

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The meeting of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases was held at OIE Headquarters, Paris from 5-7 September 2007. The meeting was chaired partly by Prof Arnon Shimshony and partly by Professor Vincenzo Caporale, President of the Scientific Commission. Dr Cristobal Zepeda and Dr Howard Batho acted as rapporteurs.

The agenda and list of participants are presented as Appendices I and II, respectively.

Dr Lea Knopf of the OIE, welcomed the group and thanked all the participants for their support to the OIE. She explained the agenda and the need for the group to look at a number of important issues.

Following the introductory remarks by Dr Lea Knopf, there was a short discussion firstly in relation to the containment zone to the recent 2 FMD outbreaks in the UK concerning the actual implementation of this principle by the OIE concerning the time frame for its introduction, secondly the rinderpest surveillance guidelines and thirdly concerning revisions of the CBPP.

1. Review of the rinderpest surveillance guidelines (Appendix 3.8.2, *Terrestrial Code* edition 2007) for consistency with other disease-specific surveillance Appendices (e.g. FMD)

The group agreed to use the same formats for rinderpest as had been used for the revised FMD with specific amendments as needed. However, the group requested that the section on interpretation of tests in wildlife and in cattle should be referred back to the experts in rinderpest *ad hoc* Group for updating. This should be included in the Article 3.8.2.7 headed "the use and interpretation of serological test."

The group noted that the term *Veterinary para-professionals* appears to be not sufficiently well defined as some countries with community animal health workers are not including these under this definition. The group recommends that the definition of *Veterinary para-professionals* is changed as follows:

> "means a person who, for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, is authorised by the veterinary statutory body to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of veterinary para-professional, such as community-based animal health workers, animal health assistants, vaccinators and veterinary assistants etc. in a country, and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a veterinarian. The tasks authorized for each category of veterinary para-professional should be defined by the veterinary statutory body depending on qualifications and training, and according to need".

The group suggested the following paragraph:

> "where the sampling frame is known, herds shall be selected for examination by the use of random number tables. Otherwise, samples of herds can be selected by taking the nearest herd to a randomly selected /generated map reference, provided that the herds are evenly distributed. Failing this, any herd(s) within a fixed radius of randomly selected map references should be sampled to avoid bias. It must be compulsory for any selected herd to be examined or tested as required"

is added to the general surveillance guidelines in Article 3.8.1.4. under the point concerning random surveys in section 4. If this is not done then this wording should be added in each of the Appendices for the specific surveillance guidelines.

In order to be more consistent parts of the rinderpest surveillance guidelines were deleted as they have nothing to do with surveillance but lay down procedures for obtaining or renewing freedom.

In addition Chapter 2.2.12 should be amended to bring it into line with other Chapters e.g. Chapter 2.2.10 on FMD to include the requirement that to be retained on the OIE list concerning the official status of the country requires that the certain information in relation to provision of a declaration for continued freedom of disease etc as laid down in Article 2.2.10.2. points 2 and 3a.

The group discussed whether the rinderpest questionnaire should be referred to or even become part of the *Code*. At the moment no reference is made to the questionnaire as it is not compulsory and this appears to have led to some confusion in certain member countries. The group recommended that either a reference be inserted to strongly recommend member countries to use the rinderpest questionnaire for their applications to the OIE or the questionnaire (in fact all questionnaires) are recommended to the International Committee to be inserted in the *Code*.

The group proposes that in Article 2.7.12.3 point one referring to the time delay for regaining free status be included in the following Articles 2.2.10 8 point 1 (a) (for FMD) and 2.2.12.3 point 1 (for rinderpest). This is required to clarify the time periods for carrying out the surveillance required when a country is trying to regain its freedom.

The group proposed to replace Article 3.8.7.6 concerning FMD with the revised Article 3.8.2.6 concerning rinderpest regarding countries or zones re-applying for freedom following an outbreak. The reason for this is to be consistent with the approach in the FMD Article so there is no need to maintain the text concerning the different strategies as this is laid down in the FMD Chapter and has no relevance to the FMD surveillance Appendix.

The group agreed to replace paragraph 5.2 in the rinderpest questionnaire with the similar paragraph 5.2 in the FMD questionnaire thereby removing the references to the figures for probability and prevalence levels which bring this Appendix into line with the other ones on surveillance.

The group was very surprised that there is currently no possibility for zoning in Chapter 2.2.12 as, if rinderpest did appear again, then the whole country would then lose its status. This could be counterproductive and is not in line with other Chapters of the *Code*. As zoning is not addressed in this Chapter, the group had no alternative but to delete all references to zoning in the proposed draft surveillance Appendix. However, the group strongly recommends that the re-introduction of the concept of zoning for rinderpest be reviewed.

The group noted that ocular and nasal swabs commonly used for rinderpest sampling for virus isolation are not mentioned in the *OIE Diagnostic Manual*. The group recommends that this gap be addressed as soon as possible.

The group felt that the detailed information on ageing although important should not be included in the surveillance Appendix but should be moved to the questionnaire

The modifications proposed for the rinderpest questionnaire, are presented in Appendix III.

2. Review of the revisions on the chapter, surveillance guidelines and questionnaire for the evaluation of country status for CBPP based on revised rinderpest documents

The group first looked at the revised Chapter and it was agreed that substantial changes were needed to bring it into line with other similar revised Chapters; in particular requirements for freedom etc. must be in the Chapter and not the Appendix. The group also applied similar principles to the CBPP surveillance guidelines

as has been done for FMD. Therefore, the group took as the basis for its work on CBPP the rinderpest Chapter (2.2.12) and the FMD guidelines for surveillance (Appendix 3.8.7) taking into account the new draft CBPP Chapter and Appendix on guidelines for surveillance from the *ad hoc* Group for evaluation of country status meeting with respect to CBPP, held 16-17 October 2006.

The group recommended that the definition or rather the interpretation of the incubation period be looked at. The present time periods specified throughout the *Code*, e.g 6 months for CBPP, bear no relationship the actual incubation periods specified in other scientific documentation. If it is intended to mean risk period then that should be specified.

The group felt it was important to try to simplify the CBPP disease status to have just one i.e. only freedom from infection as had been done for rinderpest irrespective of the work already done by the *ad hoc* Group. Therefore references to absence of disease were removed.

The EPI group proposed that the draft be sent back to the CBPP group to review 3 main points

- To provide a case definition
- To look at the need to include semen in the list of products for which trade rules may be required, however, for embryos, the semen used must comply with certain CBPP conditions.
- To interpret the diagnostic tests in the surveillance guidelines.

In addition the CBPP group should be kindly invited to check the rest of the draft Chapter.

The group was not able in the time available to amend the CBPP surveillance guidelines and this was postponed to the next meeting. The group will also take into account any feedback from the CBPP group.

3. Proposals for a fast track procedure to regain free disease or infection free status following the establishment of a containment zone

The group discussed the possibilities for a fast track procedure which should be agreed by SCAD, however the group was of the opinion that as soon as a country was able to comply with the requirements for a containment zone it should submit the detailed responses as required by Article 2.2.10 points 1-5 to the OIE. It must be highlighted that this must be a fast track procedure with an OIE reply (positive or negative) within 14 days (10 working days).

Therefore, there could then be an electronic consultation of the members of the *ad hoc* Group on disease status with perhaps input from the *ad hoc* Group on Epidemiology group and the relevant OIE Reference laboratory. If there was a negative response then an emergency meeting should be convened involving all parties including the country concerned to further asses the information and request any additional information as needed. This must be done within the time frame referred to above. It is very important that the OIE is able to respond urgently to such requests otherwise the need for a containment zone can be questioned. It should be highlighted that there are important economic consequences for the member country if this is not achieved.

The group discussed what was meant by a limited outbreak and agreed that this was dependant on the situation which could vary enormously taking into account spatial (including animal density and animal movements) and time factors and the number of outbreaks. Therefore each situation must be judged on its merits notwithstanding the number of outbreaks provided that points 1-5 of Article 2.2.10.6 are met. However the group agreed that the requirement whereby the origin of the outbreak must be known (see point 1c of this Article) should be amended as follows:

1. c) "the <u>likely</u> source of the infection has been identified"

This is because usually it is not possible to be 100% sure of the origin of the infection.

The group strongly recommends that the OIE Central Bureau prepares consolidated guidelines for all its procedures. As it appears that, for example, references to the procedures for gaining or regaining country status is spread over a number of resolutions over a number of years, These should be brought together into one document and made available on the website for practical and transparency reasons. There may be other areas where this could be done as well.

The group discussed the problem when a country could not introduce a containment zone but could amend its zoning to take account of the new epidemiological situation. The group would agree that a re-zoning would be possible if sufficient and appropriate information was provided by the member country. Then the country could apply to the OIE to amend its zoning using the normal OIE procedures and the Scientific Commission is able to approve this status without the approval of the International Committee according to Resolution No XXI of May 2003.

4. Review of Member Country comments on the draft Guidelines Appendix 3.x.x. and Chapter 1.3.5. on zoning and compartmentalisation

The group discussed the comments received from a number of member countries. Specific comments were given by the group to all the comments received by the OIE.

The group stressed the importance of the responsibilities of the veterinary services concerning compartmentalisation. The group highlighted the importance of following Chapter 1.1.2 in all matters relating to the compartment concerning certification and that this was reflected in the meaning of direct control in Article 3.x.x.8. The group felt that there was no need to amend this point.

The group agreed that the concept of the containment zone should be incorporated in this Chapter and that it should be further examined to see if it was practical to have different sections for zoning and compartmentalisation. From a preliminary review there appears to be some merit in pursuing such an approach. This should be included in the agenda of the next meeting of the Group.

As some comments were submitted concerning the AI check list for compartmentalisation the group felt that this check list should be reviewed by the group. This should be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Group.

The Group noted with satisfaction that the OIE had already replaced *Veterinary Administration* with *Veterinary Authority* throughout the text.

The Group agreed that the compartment should be agreed on a disease by disease basis but this did not necessarily mean that 2 or more separate dossiers for approval had to be put forward as long as all the disease were covered adequately in the submission to the Veterinary Authority.

The Group understood the difficulties expressed by certain comments concerning the surveillance around the establishment(s) comprising a compartment and any additional cost in this respect should be borne by the compartment as it is their own interests. However, any agreed increased surveillance should be by agreement and not mandatory and if this is not possible then other additional biosecurity measures may be needed depending on the situation. It should be up to each member country based on their own situation to handle this aspect bearing in mind that any additional surveillance will be probably be helpful in improving the animal health situation in the country.

The detailed response to Member Country comments and recommendations will be referred to the Scientific Commission for further consideration.

Epidemiological modelling

- Postponed to the next meeting so an appropriately qualified expert could join the Group.

5. Future working schedule and priority issues for the *ad hoc* Group:

- Guidelines for animal disease control and contingency planning

6. Finalisation and adoption of draft report

…/Appendice

Appendix I

MEETING OF THE

OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY

Paris, 4 – 7 September 2007

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Agenda

1. Adoption of agenda and appointment of rapporteur

2. Review of the rinderpest surveillance guidelines (Appendix 3.8.2, *Terrestrial Code* edition 2007) for consistency with other disease-specific surveillance appendices (e.g. FMD)

3. Review of the revisions on the chapter, surveillance guidelines and questionnaire for the evaluation of country status for CBPP based on revised rinderpest documents

4. Proposals for a fast track procedure to regain free disease or infection free status following the establishment of a containment zone

5. Review of Member Country comments on the draft Guidelines Appendix 3.x.x. and Chapter 1.3.5. on zoning and compartmentalisation

6. Epidemiological modelling

7. Future working schedule and priority issues for *ad hoc* Group:

8. Guidelines for animal disease control and contingency planning

9. Finalisation and adoption of draft report

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Appendix II

MEETING OF THE
OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON EPIDEMIOLOGY WITH INVITED EXPERTS
Paris, 4 – 7 September 2007

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RINDERPEST INFECTION FREE COUNTRY

Report of Country which applies for recognition of status, under Chapter 2.2.12 and Appendix 3.8.2 of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, as a rinderpest infection free country

Please address concisely the following topics. National regulations laws and *Veterinary Administration* directives may be referred to and annexed as appropriate

1. Introduction

1.1. Geographical factors. Provide a general description of the country including physical, geographical and other factors that are relevant to rinderpest dissemination, countries sharing common borders and other countries that although may not be adjacent share a link for the potential introduction of disease. Provide a map identifying the factors above.

1.2. Livestock industry. Provide a general description of the livestock industry in the country.

2. Veterinary system

2.1. Legislation. Provide a list and summary of all relevant veterinary legislation in relation to rinderpest.

2.2. *Veterinary Services.* Provide documentation on the compliance of the Veterinary Service of the country with the provisions of Chapters 1.3.3. and 1.3.4. of the *Terrestrial Code* and I.1.2 of the *Terrestrial Manual* and describe how the veterinary services supervise and control all rinderpest related activities. Provide maps and tables wherever possible.

2.3. Role of farmers, industry and other relevant groups in rinderpest surveillance and control (include a description of training and awareness programs on rinderpest)

2.4. Role of private veterinary profession in rinderpest surveillance and control

3. Rinderpest eradication

3.1. History. Provide a description of the rinderpest history in the country, date of first detection, origin of infection, date of eradication, lineage(s) present.

3.2. Strategy. Describe how rinderpest was controlled and eradicated (e.g. stamping-out, modified stamping-out, zoning), provide timeframe for eradication

3.3. Vaccines and vaccination. Was rinderpest vaccine ever used? If so, when was the last vaccination carried out? What species were vaccinated? Has heterologous vaccine been used in cattle, buffalo or yak?

3.4. Legislation, organisation and implementation of the rinderpest eradication campaign. Provide a description of the organizational structure at the different levels. Indicate if detailed operational guidelines exist and give a brief summary.

3.5. Animal identification and movement control. Are susceptible animals identified (individually or at a group level)? Provide a description of the methods of animal identification, herd registration and traceability. How are animal movements controlled in the country? Provide evidence on the effectiveness of animal identification and movement controls.

4. Rinderpest diagnosis

Provide evidence that a system is in place for the rapid confirmation of a suspected outbreak i.e. that the provisions in Chapters I.1.2 and 2.2.1~~2~~.4.~~2~~ of the *Terrestrial Manual* are applied. In particular, the following points should be addressed:

4.1. Is rinderpest laboratory diagnosis carried out in the country? If so, provide a list of approved laboratories. If not, provide the name(s) of and the arrangements with the laboratory(ies) samples are sent to.

4.2. Provide an overview of the rinderpest approved laboratories, in particular to address the following points:

4.2.1. Procedures for the official accreditation of laboratories. Give details of internal quality management systems, e.g. Good Laboratory Practice, ISO etc. that exist in, or planned for, the laboratory system.

4.2.2. Give details of participation in inter-laboratory validation tests (ring tests).

4.2.3. Is live virus handled?

4.2.4. Biosecurity measures applied

4.2.5. Details of the type of tests undertaken

5. Rinderpest surveillance

Provide documentary evidence that surveillance for rinderpest in the country complies with the provisions of Appendix 3.8.2. of the *Terrestrial Code* and Chapter 2.2.12.2 of the *Terrestrial Manual*. In particular, the following points should be addressed:

5.1. Clinical suspicion. What are the criteria for raising a suspicion of rinderpest? What is the procedure to notify (by whom and to whom) and what penalties are involved for failure to report? Provide a summary table indicating, for the past two years, the number of suspect cases, the number of samples tested for rinderpest virus, species, type of sample, testing method(s) and results (including differential diagnosis). In particular, provide evidence of compliance with the provisions of paragraph 3.~~5.~~ of Appendix 3.8.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*.

5.2. Serological surveillance. Are serological surveys conducted? If so, provide detailed information on the survey design in accordance with ~~paragraph 3 to 5 of~~ Appendix 3.8.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*~~,~~[1] ~~(annual sample sizes shall be sufficient to provide 95% probability of detecting evidence of rinderpest if present at a prevalence of 1% of herds or other sampling units and 5% within herds or other sampling units)~~. How frequently are they conducted? Are wildlife susceptible species included in serological surveys? If not, explain the rationale. Provide a summary table indicating, for the past two years, the number of samples tested for rinderpest virus, species, type of sample, testing method(s) and results (including differential diagnosis). Provide details on follow up actions taken on all suspicious and positive results.

5.3. Livestock demographics and economics. What is the susceptible animal population by species and production systems? How many herds, flocks, etc., of each susceptible species are in the country? How are they distributed (e.g., herd density, etc.)? Provide tables and maps as appropriate.

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1 Accounts of the ages for eruption of the incisor teeth vary markedly and are clearly dependent on species, breed, nutritional status and nature of the feed.

Therefore, for the purposes of serosurveillance, it should be noted that:

a) cattle having only one pair of erupted permanent central incisor teeth are aged between 21 and 36 months (Asian buffalos 24-48 months);

b) cattle having only two pairs of erupted permanent central incisor teeth are aged between 30 and 48 months (Asian buffalos 48-60 months).

5.4. Wildlife demographics. What susceptible species are present in the country? Provide estimates of population sizes and geographic distribution. What are the measures in place to prevent contact between domestic and wildlife susceptible species?

5.5. Slaughterhouses and markets. Where are the major livestock marketing or collection centers? What are the patterns of livestock movement within the country? How are the animals transported and handled during these transactions.

6. Rinderpest prevention

6.1. Coordination with neighbouring countries. Are there any relevant factors about the adjacent countries that should be taken into account (e.g., size, distance from adjacent border to affected herds or animals)? Describe coordination, collaboration and information sharing activities with neighbouring countries.

6.2. Import control procedures

From what countries or zones does the country authorize the import of susceptible animals or their products? What criteria are applied to approve such countries or zones? What controls are applied on entry of such animals and products, and subsequent internal movement? What import conditions and test procedures are required? Are imported animals of susceptible species required to undergo a quarantine or isolation period? If so, for how long and where? Are import permits and health certificates required? What other procedures are used? Provide summary statistics of imports of susceptible animals and their products for the past two years, specifying country or zone of origin, species and volume.

6.2.1. Provide a map with the number and location of ports, airports and land crossings. Is the official service responsible for import controls part of the official services, or is it an independent body? If it is an independent body, describe its management structure, staffing levels and resources, and its accountability to the central veterinary services. Describe the communication systems between the central authorities and the border inspection posts, and between border inspection posts.

6.2.2. Describe the regulations, procedures, type and frequency of checks at the point of entry into the country and/or their final destination, concerning the import and follow up of the following:

a) animals
b) genetic material (semen and embryos)
c) animal products
d) veterinary medicinal products (i.e. biologics)

6.2.3. Describe the action available under legislation, and actually taken, when an illegal import is detected. Provide information on detected illegal imports.

7. Control measures and contingency planning

7.1. Give details of any written guidelines, including contingency plans, available to the official services for dealing with suspected or confirmed outbreaks of rinderpest.

7.2. Is quarantine imposed on premises with suspicious cases, pending final diagnosis? What other procedures are followed regarding suspicious cases?

7.3. In the event of a rinderpest outbreak:

7.3.1 indicate the sampling and testing procedures used to identify and confirm presence of the causative agent.

7.3.2 describe the actions taken to control the disease situation in and around any holdings found to be infected with rinderpest,

7.3.3 indicate the control and/or eradication procedures (e.g. vaccination, stamping out, partial slaughter/vaccination etc) that would be taken,

7.3.4 describe the procedures used to confirm that an outbreak has been successfully controlled/eradicated, including any restrictions on restocking,

7.3.5 Give details of any compensation payments made available to farmers etc when animals are slaughtered for disease control/eradication purposes.

8. Compliance with the *Terrestrial Code*

8.1. The Delegate of the country must submit documentary evidence that the provisions of Article 2.2.12.2 or 3.8.1.6 (historical freedom) have been properly implemented and supervised.

9. Recovery of status

Countries applying for recovery of status should comply with the provisions of Article 2.2.12.3 of the *Terrestrial Code* and provide detailed information as specified in sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 5.2 of this report. Information in relation to other sections need only be supplied if relevant.

Appendix VII

Original: English
September 2007

OIE *AD HOC* GROUP FOR EVALUATION OF COUNTRY STATUS FOR BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE *TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH CODE*

Paris, 16–20 July and 12–14 September 2007

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A.- Joint Meeting Report

In two sessions, the meeting of the *Ad hoc* Group for evaluation of country submissions as complying with the 2007 bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) Chapter of the *OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) for recognition as 'negligible BSE risk' or 'controlled BSE risk' status was held at OIE headquarters from 16 to 20 July 2007 and 12 to 14 September 2007. The agenda and list of participants are provided as Appendices I and II, respectively. Dr. M. Nunn, due to other commitments, has resigned from the group. A replacement will be sought, bearing in mind the need to ensure geographical representation in the evaluative process. Prof. V. Caporale, President of the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases, chaired part of the first session, the balance of which and the second session being chaired by Dr. J. Kellar. Drs. K. Van Dyck and J. Kellar shared rapporteur responsibilities.

The OIE Director General, Dr B. Vallat welcomed the Group and briefly reiterated the evolution of the OIE's involvement in standards for BSE and its dedication of Dr. L. Knopf to that process under the direction of Dr. G. Brückner. He acknowledged the considerable workload and restrictive time lines this represented for the OIE and the *Ad hoc* Group. He outlined the process whereby the recommendations of this Group would be considered and endorsed by the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (SCAD) at its meeting the week of September 17 2007, followed by 60 days for comment by Delegates of Member countries, and then comment and adoption by the International Committee at the General Session in May 2008.

Dr G. Brückner, Head of the OIE Technical and Scientific Department, welcomed the Group and stressed the need for consistency of approach in assessing dossiers submitted for evaluation of BSE status against the BSE chapter of the 2007 Terrestrial Code. He described the greater lead time now being given member countries for comments regarding proposed BSE assessments. Further to that development, he announced an ensuing September 2007 Administrative Commission discussion on the potential interim use of status designations pending statutory May votes of the International Commission.

At the time of the September 2007 session, he noted that a delegation had arrived from Paraguay and asked that the Group meet with it during the course of that session. Although the Paraguayan submission had arrived too late for assessment in the current round, the Group's cursory assessment would permit an exchange of questions face to face to facilitate Paraguay's provision of additional documentation which might be required in a January 2008 review.

Consistent with guidance from Prof. Caporale during preceding sessions, the group compared and contrasted all of the dossiers received before making formal evaluations against the BSE Chapter of the 2007 Terrestrial Code. Dr. Vallat and Prof. Caporale stressed the need for strict confidentiality concerning the deliberations of the Group, noting that all dossiers remained confidential as did the discussions, the *Ad hoc* Group's notes, and any preliminary evaluations and recommendations (which could not be finalised until after consideration by SCAD and final adoption by the International Committee at the General Session in May 2008. During consideration of the dossiers, to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest, members whose own countries were being evaluated withdrew themselves from assessment of those respective submissions.

This report, like its predecessor, includes a section on technical comments, clearly differentiated from the evaluations made against the BSE chapter of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The *Ad hoc* Group continues to experience challenges in evaluating the country dossiers. It has retained the technical reference to highlight to the Scientific Commission and the International Committee a number of technical issues and concerns underlying those challenges. The Group is encouraged in this regard by the OIE's scheduling in November 2007 of an *Ad hoc* Group on these and related subject matter concerning the BSE chapter of the Terrestrial Code.

1. Technical comments

1.1. Evaluation of BSE status in the context of broader considerations

The Group continues to evaluate BSE status in the context of broader considerations, particularly the influence of other Chapters of the Code. It noted that in considering the recommendations of the Group's October 2005 meeting, SCAD had taken into account interpretations arising from, in particular, the Code Chapters on surveillance, risk analysis, and evaluation of veterinary services.

The Group continues to acknowledge that SCAD's consideration of this broader context (and related guidance to SCAD by the Director General) reflects SCAD's desire for flexibility in interpretation of the Code and related documents — taking into account the experience, expertise and judgement of its own members and those of its *Ad hoc* Groups. As witnessed in SCAD's interpretation of 2005 country submissions, this position reflects the complexity of the work undertaken and the inadequacy of following what would otherwise be an automatic 'checklist' approach.

The Group reaffirmed, as in its preceding sessions of November 2006 and January 2007, that if the process detected an apparent inconsistency between any part of the Code Chapter on BSE, the risk assessment guidelines and the questionnaire on BSE status, the Chapter would rule. It was agreed that if any apparent inconsistency were detected, the Group would, through its chair, formally advise SCAD and propose a possible means to resolve the situation.

1.2. Dossier allocations among Group members

The Group noted that the system of allocating – electronically, in advance of the meeting - specific dossiers for detailed review and presentation by particular members of the Group continues to work well except in the unfortunately repetitive circumstances in which members cannot attend one or more of the conjoint sessions. Despite this latter reality, as demonstrated by the absence of two experts during the September 2007 session, The Group continues to pursue the ideal that two members review each dossier in parallel, each member bringing different skills and experience that ensure a more thorough review and preliminary evaluation than if only one member were so assigned.

It was also noted that in some cases, particularly with any country that had provided abbreviated information for evaluation to confirm a BSE status that had previously been evaluated and endorsed, reference needed to be made to previous dossiers from that country. New members of the Group who had not been involved in evaluating the initial dossier from such a country did not always have information sufficient to support an evaluation to confirm a country's previously endorsed status.

The OIE Secretariat has thus made available, for reference at each meeting of the Group, hard and electronic copies of previous dossiers and related correspondence for each country being evaluated.

1.3. Importance of ensuring that dossiers adhere to format of BSE status questionnaire

The Group noted that the evaluation of BSE status against the requirements of the Code was greatly facilitated when dossiers presented information exactly as requested and in the format of the questionnaire. Dossiers received during the current round of submissions represented a markedly improved adherence to the OIE standard, reflecting the clarity of the initial guidance and the benefit derived from reminders provided to submittors following the preceding round of evaluations. The Group continues to caution that dossiers which do not comply with the questionnaire format might omit information that would increase the likelihood of a favourable evaluation.

1.4. Importance of submitting dossiers electronically and on time

The Group reiterated, as during its preceding sessions, the concerns of its Chairman regarding evaluation inefficiencies caused by tardy submissions. The pre-meeting assignment of dossiers among members is dependent upon both their scheduled arrival and their receipt in electronic format. The Group noted that the early distribution of dossiers before meetings helped to ensure that members were well prepared and that the face-to-face meetings were efficient. Having voluminous dossiers in electronic format (particularly as Adobe .pdf files) greatly facilitates their distribution to members. The Group thanks the OIE Secretariat for advances achieved in this crucial area.

1.5. Transition to the new evaluative process

Both the Group and submittors continue to display evidence of a smooth transition to BSE status evaluation based on the 2007 Code and the associated questionnaire template. Technical points raised in this report, as in its last iteration, are considered administrative in nature as opposed to reflecting on the process itself. The greater definition and objectivity in terms of information sought regarding key BSE program elements and the guidance received from SCAD and Dr. B. Vallat since 2005 has facilitated the transition.

1.6. Responding to incomplete dossiers

In the continuing spirit of flexibility which governs the current evaluative process, the Group sought additional information and clarification from submittors when dossiers were considered incomplete upon initial review. Where applicable, questions were directed in writing to Delegates except for one occasion on which representatives were on hand to receive the enquiries directly.

As an adjunct to the above process, the Group agreed to continue to accept other relevant information (e.g. from GBR, Eurostat, FAO) when available and advisable to supplement – but not replace – that included in otherwise incomplete dossiers. It also agreed that it should specifically cite the source of any additional information used and note this in its report to the relevant Delegate whenever this is done. During the current session, this recourse was generally limited to the determination of the size of national cattle populations 24 months and older.

1.7. The appropriate period for the risk assessment

The *Ad hoc* Group reiterates its noting of an apparent inconsistency between the risk assessment guidelines and the questionnaire on recognition of BSE status with regard to the period to be scrutinized for imports of both animals and MBM. Seven and eight years, respectively, are specified in the questionnaire but not in the risk assessment guidelines. The *Ad hoc* Group notes that the Code itself does not limit the time period.

In deference to the Code and reflecting on the world experience in the demographics of animal and MBM movements from infected countries in the 1990s, the *Ad hoc* Group recommends that the period in the questionnaire be specified as a minimum of 14 years, reflecting about twice the 95th percentile of the estimated incubation period, about three times the average incubation period, and a reasonable average maximum lifetime for cattle.

As in former sessions, the recommended modification does not negatively impact submissions received.

1.8. Assessment of feed ban effectiveness

The Group continued to explore the interpretation of what constitutes an appropriate level of control and audit, especially in countries in which BSE had occurred, irrespective of the minimal number - or year of birth - of cases. The Group continued to approach this issue in the spirit of flexibility advocated by SCAD as alluded to earlier in this report. As in prior sessions, within each submission, feed ban findings were judged on their own merit and in conjunction with those of the associated risk assessment and surveillance applications.

To ensure consistency in evaluation among countries, a table was developed wherein summary information from all current submissions was compared and contrasted while reflecting on the process in respect of countries submitted during the November 2006 and January 2007 sessions. The Group dedicated considerable time to discussion of the subject, particularly in respect of countries qualifying for recognition as being of "negligible BSE risk".

As in its previous report, the Group reminds countries that feed testing programs predicated on detection of only elevated thresholds of contamination (0.5% or 1.0 %), while sensitive to deliberate violations, are unlikely to detect inadvertent cross-contamination.

Since the inception of the BSE Chapter, risk assessment and surveillance results have served as the key points of reference in assessment of the underlying BSE prevalence of a country. The November 2006 and January 2007 assessment process marked the first time that detailed surveillance findings – on an age cohort basis facilitated by the BSurvE model – were reviewed in terms of the additional contribution that they might also make towards gauging the apparent effectiveness of a feed ban. Consideration of surveillance and risk assessment results were again employed in the currently reported sessions to ensure that the overarching concept of mitigation commensurate with risk was not lost upon those conducting evaluations pursuant to the Code and the 2005 guidance of the SCAD alluded to earlier in this document.

1.9. Assessment of surveillance adequacy

As in previously reported sessions, assessment of several countries showed that they clearly merited an evaluation of better than 'undetermined BSE risk', although their surveillance programs – while approaching - had not yet accumulated the target number of surveillance points formally required for designation as "controlled BSE risk". In acknowledgement of the evolution in surveillance guidance in the Code over time; the conservative allotment of surveillance credits in Table 2 of Appendix 3.8.4; as well as the particular challenge facing countries with smaller cattle populations, the Group approached this issue in the spirit of flexibility advocated by SCAD as alluded to earlier in this report.

For countries with a cattle population of close to one million adult animals, a comprehensive testing program and surveillance points approaching but not having reached the required allotment, the Group reviewed the statistical surveillance trend and extrapolated to determine whether the allotment would have been achieved by moving the seven year window of assessment forward to encompass 2001 - 2007 calendar years in lieu of 2000 - 2006. The Group noted the fact in the assessments so affected.

For a limited number of countries with a very small cattle population – a perennial assessment challenge - surveillance targets were established by way of a linear extrapolation from the mid-point of the lowest population range in Table 1 of Appendix 3.8.4 to the sizes of the adult cattle populations of those submittors. While the Group recognized that the sigmoidal nature of the statistical curve underlying the relationships in Table 1 might not fully support the extrapolation, it nevertheless applied the process in the recognition that, were such countries able to apply the underlying BSurvE model in its entirety to their populations, in all probability they would have attained a higher cumulative points score. The latter observation flows from the fact that the abridging process of Table 2 of Appendix 3.8.4 allots points in accordance with the lowest qualifying age within each age range described.

International commerce under the WTO and facilitated by the OIE has fostered a significant commercial migration of cattle among countries, for not only immediate slaughter but also breeding purposes and eventual attrition at ages key to BSE surveillance. While BSE surveillance points may be accrued by countries which immediately or eventually harvest such imports, the scientifically defensible attribution of the associated BSurvE points is to only the geography in which the tested animals resided during their respective "windows of vulnerability" to BSE infection.

While the loss of such points is not an issue for countries of large populations and robust testing programs, it could negatively impact the submissions of others, particularly in the case of smaller national cattle herds. One country evaluated to date exported two of every three slaughter animals, for example. The Group reminds member countries that merit might exist in pursuing the domestic

attribution of BSE points gathered from indigenous animals harvested elsewhere. The process carries a significant responsibility, in that the Group will only acknowledge those BSurvE points harvested beyond a submittor's borders if it has been demonstrated that they represent indigenous animals whose windows of vulnerability to BSE infection encompassed their period of domestic residence.

To encourage countries to strive to improve their surveillance and progress towards a higher BSE status, the Group commits to the following draft paragraph adopted in the previously reported sessions. The Group recommends that it be included in evaluation reports provided to Delegates of countries that have not yet met the target number of surveillance points but that are clearly striving to implement surveillance and risk mitigation measures to improve their BSE status:

> *A review of your dossier indicates that the trend in the number of surveillance points described is approaching the target number for designation as [Controlled BSE Risk OR Negligible BSE Risk] for the size of your country's adult cattle population in accordance with the surveillance requirements specified in Appendix 3.8.4. Designation of your country as [Controlled BSE Risk OR Negligible BSE Risk] took into consideration this trend, in the light of the risk assessment and mitigation measures undertaken, despite the fact that you have not yet attained the target number of surveillance points formally required. For OIE to confirm this positive trend is continuing [OR that the target has been attained] you are reminded that you should ensure that your annual report includes specific details of your annual surveillance. These details should be provided in the format of Table 3.6 in Section 3 of the questionnaire on recognition of BSE status.*

1.10. Ongoing surveillance requirements

As initially noted in its previous report from the November 2006 and January 2007 sessions, the Group continues to support – in respect of ongoing surveillance requirements - the following draft paragraph for inclusion, where relevant, in reports to Delegates:

> *A review of your dossier indicates that you have met the surveillance requirements for designation as [Controlled BSE Risk OR Negligible BSE Risk] for the size of your country's adult cattle population in accordance with the surveillance requirements specified in Appendix 3.8.4. The retention of such status depends in part on the continuing accumulation of surveillance points.*
>
> *To continue to designate the status of a country as Negligible BSE Risk, in reference to Appendix 3.8.4, the continuing surveillance requirement becomes that of level B. To continue to designate the status of a country as Controlled BSE Risk, in reference to Appendix 3.8.4, once seven years of surveillance has been undertaken at level A, the continuing surveillance requirement may be reduced to that required under level B (provided all other indicators remain positive).*
>
> *In both instances, to continue to conform with the requirements of Appendix 3.8.4, ongoing annual surveillance must continue to include all clinical cases and at least three of the four prescribed subpopulations must continue to be sampled. It is expected that surveillance in each succeeding year will contribute no less than one-seventh of the number of surveillance points required for designation as [Negligible BSE Risk, OR Controlled BSE Risk with Surveillance Level B].*

1.10. Assessment self-critique

The experience of having processed approximately 40 submissions has permitted the Group to identify a number of areas worthy of revision in respect of the questionnaire or the underlying Code provisions upon which it is founded. These are brought to the attention of the SCAD for requested guidance which includes in part the November *Ad hoc* Group of experts alluded to earlier in this report.

The questionnaire refers only to controls in establishments using material of bovine origin. In order to assess the control over the implementation of the feed ban, it should encompass all establishments.

The adult cattle population not requested but required for each assessment against Table 1 of Appendix 3.8.4, should be incorporated in the questionnaire.

In support of circumstances where the aggregation of surveillance points serves as the singular obstacle for classification advancement in accordance with the Terrestrial Code and in particular in respect of interpretations against the requirements of Appendix 3.8.4, it would assist the Group if the Epidemiology *Ad hoc* Group or the BSE Surveillance *Ad hoc* Group could undertake to define the relationship between the points allocations of Table 2 of that Appendix and those which would accrue in a full BSurvE application to the same circumstance, assuming a nominal age distribution curve for the surveyed population.

A review is requested of the evaluative process whereby a country, due to insufficient surveillance points, might by default be assigned an undetermined risk status clearly not applicable in light of the composite of other circumstances.

2. Country Evaluations

As in its deliberations of November 2006 and January 2007, the Group employed a matrix restricted to internal purposes, incorporating the key parameters which described the BSE program of each submittor and observations made in respect of each.

The *Ad hoc* Group assessed the country dossiers of Norway, Iceland and the Member States of the EU. The dossier of Paraguay was rescheduled, with guidance to the submittor, for the January 2008 session as a result of its late receipt and the Group's heavy workload.

The distribution of dossiers among individual assessors led to a marked variability in the degree of information displayed to the Group in plenary discussion for comparison across all submissions. Towards achievement of a level of reporting uniformity which fairly portrayed the status of all submittors, the Group agreed upon a number of generic statements which abridge but reflect in each instance the underlying detailed assessment process. In so doing it sought to strike a balance which allowed member countries to see the basis on which decisions were made without inundation by peripheral facts.

Consistent with other sessions, minimal discussion was required for the bulk of submissions which clearly gravitated towards the centre of the broad category of "controlled BSE risk". Those resident at its extremes commanded much more time and, at the risk of redundancy, reiteration for consideration by the SCAD, following considerable discussion regarding ascertainment of feed ban adequacy, a series of commitments the Group felt guided by in its deliberations. They encompassed a pledge of fairness to all submissions; equivalent treatment of all, in both current and retrospective application as indicated by circumstances; adherence to precedents; guidance to submittors of incomplete dossiers and review of responsive revisions received within practicable time limits.

At both polar extremes, the Group pursued in depth, further to the preceding commitments, both assistance to the submittors and consensus as to their status. In respect of the latter, regarding Finland and Sweden and in contrast to most discussions, while the majority favoured assignment of a status ("negligible BSE risk"), consensus could not be reached around underlying feed ban adequacy.

The Group's determinations yielded decisions generally of "negligible BSE risk" or "controlled BSE risk". For those submissions in which the Group employed its discretion to interpret circumstances generally but not specifically covered by the assessment process, it included statements to indicate the fact in its report. Reference to the determination that surveillance credits accumulation by the end of calendar year 2007 will have met a surveillance goal is an example. This the Group considered as having assigned "controlled BSE risk with conditions requiring specific attention at the time of annual updates on status retention".

In response to questions regarding its role in assessment of updates received from countries generally or in response to the conditions described immediately above, the Group was advised that its guidance would be sought in instances in which the submitted information could impact upon status retention. The SCAD would otherwise process the updates in the manner of those submitted in respect of a number of other diseases.

For a number of countries, the information provided was inadequate for the Group to decide upon any of the preceding options. In consultation with Dr. G. Brückner, it was decided that the Group would report such situations as beyond determination and that Countries not meeting the negligible nor controlled risk status will not be submitted for the 60 days commenting period nor will they be presented at the International Committee in May 2008.

The country of Taipei China had been assigned the status of "controlled BSE risk" during evaluations conducted in November 2006 and January 2007. In response to a request for a reassessment of its status during the current sessions, the Group assisted the OIE in preparation of a letter requesting updated information in respect of key parameters. Until receipt of new information, the Group maintains its former designation.

B.- Country Evaluation Reports

1. AUSTRIA

The submission from Austria sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Austria submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Austria provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Although MBM imports during the interval of interest have been documented as taking the form of pet food, approximately 18,000 bovines were imported, mostly from European Union (EU) Member States - principally Germany - with a minority from third countries. No information was given on importations of products of bovine origin beyond the meat and bone meal (MBM).

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Austria through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Risk mitigation measures in Austria, from the Austrian Animal Materials Act and passage of BSE-specific national control measures in 1990 through to adoption of EU directives since accession in 1995, have generally paralleled those of the EU.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

Surveillance streams as advocated by the OIE guidelines have been employed in the aggregation of a points' total which, year by year, has been increasing to the point that, by incorporating 2007 among the seven years of documentation for review, will meet the requirements for an adult cattle population of the size described.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken will meet by December 31, 2007 the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation was provided to confirm a longstanding (1990) and broadly based training in the veterinary, agricultural and other sectors, including reference to the number of individuals addressed.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

Judicial incentives for compliance and notification were documented. Since 2001, EU-recognized ID and electronic database systems and herd registries have assisted.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1991 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Testing has taken place since 1990/1991 on a passive, clinical basis, progressing actively since in concert with EU provisions.

Laboratory examination

Since rapid testing started in 2001, National Veterinary Services labs have performed TSE testing employing rapid tests in accordance with EU guidance protocol. Laboratory procedures are qualified in accordance with EU standards.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

Of the six animals diagnosed with BSE, the youngest birth cohort affected was June 2000.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Austria be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The BSE *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements

  Please provide continuing evidence that the Type A surveillance target has been met before transition to the Type B approach mentioned in the dossier.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  Transparent documentation closely adhered to the template provided, with ample reference material included.

2. BELGIUM

The submission from Belgium sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Belgium submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Belgium provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

During the interval 1999-2006, documentation related to the period 1999-2004 indicates the importation of more than 100,000 tons of MBM from third countries only, many of which represent countries at risk. The dossier provides raw information about MBM importation within the EU. It seems that a large amount of MBM has been introduced in Belgium during this period. Animal importation (more than 300,000 bovines in 1999-2004) has been overwhelmingly from other EU countries, and relatively little from third countries. Animal by- products were imported from several countries.

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent: The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered the Belgium through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

An appropriate level of controls and inspections concerning collection, elimination and destruction of carcasses and risk-specified materials (SRM) results in an adequate system to reduce the risk of recycling and amplification of BSE.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Since 1995, all staff was involved over time. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Belgium includes as "suspect animals" both animals exhibiting "behavioral or clinical signs consistent with BSE," as well as "non-ambulatory, recumbent." Belgium also includes five additional categories of animals under the "suspect" classification.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

Belgium presents good information in this area and demonstrates that appropriate controls are in place concerning the feed ban. There is also a good registration system for cross-contamination at feed mills.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was November 1998.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Belgium be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as ''Controlled BSE risk".

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The BSE *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- -Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- Annual update, specific requirements
- Specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  While several questions on the questionnaire seem to have been bundled up and summarized, the required information has been, by and large, presented. All tables have been placed in Annexes, not in the questionnaire itself, which was somewhat cumbersome, but in the final analysis the information is available. The Delegate of Belgium is invited, in future annual updates to OIE, to follow closely the format recommended by OIE in the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* 2007.

3. CYPRUS

The submission from Cyprus sought generic assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Cyprus submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Cyprus provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Imports of MBM, of limited numbers of cattle and of products of bovine origin have occurred during the interval of interest, with documentation of MBM origin, composition and destination except for missing records which relate to the statutory limitation on their retention. Documentation supports the longstanding risk mitigating position adopted by Cyprus in respect of these commodities.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Cyprus through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Documentation made frequent reference to the evolution within Cyprus, before and upon its accession to the EU, of all those controls are internationally accepted as significant in mitigating the recycling and amplification of BSE. These are regarded as further supported by the fact that the traditional feeding of bovines in Cyprus, as well as government intervention in several related areas, has created a commercial and social environment, pre-dating the interval of interest, which de-emphasized the use of MBM.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation was provided to confirm a longstanding (since 1991) and broadly based (inspectors, practitioners, producers, industry and trade personnel, slaughterhouse and rendering) programme through all communications modes. The related contingency program has been updated periodically since 2003.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

Monetary and judicial incentives support compliance and notification. Since its 2001 initiation, the currently EU-recognized ID and electronic database system and herd registries have supported this process.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Testing within the recommended surveillance streams is further supported by the fact that 30 to 100% of herds are inspected by cooperative agreement with the National Veterinary Services annually as part of a general health program.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

BSE has not been reported in Cyprus.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Cyprus be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommend 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The transparent documentation adhered to the requested format, with reference material included, but requiring a degree of searching for key elements not portrayed fully in line with sections delineated.

4. CZECH REPUBLIC

The submission from the Czech Republic sought generic assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The Czech Republic submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

The Czech Republic provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

A large amount of MBM was imported from BSE-risk countries, mainly Germany, Italy and Austria. Data are available since 1999. No information is available concerning species composition of the imported MBM.

Cattle imports originated from BSE-risk countries, mainly Poland and Slovakia. Most of those imported from the EU were young cattle for immediate slaughter.

Fresh, chilled or frozen meat and cattle offal (SRM removed) were imported from 1999 to September 2006.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered the Czech Republic through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

A ruminant to ruminant feed ban came into force in 1991, which was extended in 1996, a mammalian to ruminant feed ban came into force in 2001.

In 1996, rendering parameters (133C, 20' 3 bar <50 mm) were introduced and SRM was removed and disposed of since 2000.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there was a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

Total cattle population was 1,389,629 in 2006. Total points exceeded 350,000, including only 1 clinical suspect.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3. of Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5

Awareness programme

Information about BSE was distributed starting from 1991 onwards. The awareness programme with the EU legislation complies in 2001. Farmers, authorized private veterinarians, official veterinarians and veterinary auxiliaries are involved in the programme. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and identification

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1999 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

Laboratory diagnosis has been performed since 1996, and SVI operates laboratory test approved by EU since 2002. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

Control of feed by microscopy started in 1999, infractions were low (1-7) and found constantly even in 2006. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that for the control of the proper implementation of the feed ban an increasing number of samples have been examined.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest BSE case was born in January 2001

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that the Czech Republic be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements

  The** Ad hoc* Group ***requests that the Czech Republic review its categorization of tested animals by surveillance stream to ensure that the update presents a clear and defensible representation of the BSE surveillance programme (particularly in regard to the ratios among routine slaughter, casualty slaughter and fallen stock)

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group notes a disturbing relationship regarding the relative proportions of BSE surveillance samples represented by casualty slaughter and fallen stock. The values deviate markedly from both, the world experience in terms of animal mortality rates and the European experience in terms of surveillance application.

5. DENMARK

The submission from Denmark sought particular status assessment for controlled risk against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Denmark submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Denmark provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM-imports into Denmark have been forbidden since 1933 and only allowed by derogation. Some poultry meal was imported from BSE-risk countries.

Cattle have been imported from several BSE-risk European countries, mainly from the Netherlands and Germany. Cattle imported from the UK before 1990, were in 1996 traced back and treated specially.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Denmark through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

A ruminant to ruminant feed ban came into force in 1990, which was enhanced in 1994 to a mammalian to ruminant ban and in 2001 to a total feed ban. Effective rendering parameters were introduced in 1997. In February 2000 SRM in feed was banned.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

With 740,000 adult cattle, the number of surveillance points collected significantly exceeds the number needed for Type A surveillance.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

First information about BSE was distributed in 1988; since then regular information has been shared.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

An increasing number of samples have been examined since 1994 in the control of the proper implementation of the feed ban. In most cases only traces of MBM were found.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was March 1999.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Denmark be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

6. ESTONIA

The submission from Estonia sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 Terrestrial Code. Estonia submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Estonia provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM has been imported from Norway, Belgium and Sweden in 1999 and 2000. There was no importation of MBM after 2000. Animals have been imported from countries at risk, in the period 1989 – 2007 from EU countries.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Estonia through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Estonia has a traditional extensive feeding practice for cattle, with low milk production and limited use of concentrates and animal protein. The ban on ruminant-to-ruminant animal protein feeding came into force in 2001. Other regulations concerning specified risk materials for animal feed came into force in 2000, and are in line with EU regulations from 2002 onwards. Until 30 June 2003 MBM was allowed in feeding non-ruminants. Currently MBM is only used as feed in fur-animal farms.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The Ad hoc Group *concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007* Terrestrial Code.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 2000 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Passive surveillance started from 1999, changing into active surveillance in year 2001, when rapid tests were introduced.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The annual inspection program includes four yearly inspections for commercial feed producers. In addition, intermediaries and farms are inspected by veterinary county centers.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

BSE has never been diagnosed in Estonia.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Estonia be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  Estonia is invited, in future annual updates to OIE, to follow closely the format recommended by OIE in the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*.

7. FINLAND

The submission from Finland sought a negligible BSE risk status assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Finland submitted a dossier which conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

In 1999-2000 at total of 23,013 tons of meat meal from the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway as well as 1,286 tons of MBM from Norway were imported to Finland to be used in pig or poultry feed (until the beginning of 2001) and in the feed for fur animals and pets. The import of MBM was prohibited in 2001 and no MBM has been imported to Finland since.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that the risk can not be considered negligible that the BSE agent entered Finland through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries prior to the year 2001.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The use of MBM in ruminant feed has been prohibited since 1996. Since January 2001 there has been a total prohibition to use processed animal proteins in the feeding of all farmed animals. From 1 April 1997 processing standards of 133°C, 20 min, 3 bars were applied in Finland.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of the type A and B surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The targets set out in Appendix 3.8.4. were achieved in 2003.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Examination of animals showing clinical signs of BSE started in 1998 (start of active surveillance). A total of 433 clinical suspects were examined for BSE in 1988-2000. In line with EU provisions surveillance was enhanced in January 2001.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was February 1995.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3

The only indigenous BSE case was born more than 11 years ago. The criteria in points 2 to 4 of Article 2.3.13.2 have been complied with for at least 7 years and it has been demonstrated through an appropriate level of control and audit that for at least 8 years neither MBM nor greaves has been fed to ruminants.

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Negligible BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  ' negligible BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements

  In order to assess the compliance with surveillance requirements according to Appendix 3.8.4, Finland is invited to provide annually the surveillance results of the preceding year.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The dossier complied with the template of the Questionnaire for BSE Status recognition and all information was accessible

8. FRANCE

The submission from France sought generic status assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. France submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

France provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Taking into account the origin and trade conditions applicable, the risk for the introduction of the BSE agent since 1999 is considered low.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered France through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries prior to 1999.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Since 1990 the feeding of MBM to ruminants has been prohibited by law. This interdiction has been modified over the years. Since 1998 standard processing, according to EU regulations, has been in place and applied to all animal proteins destined for feeding purposes. Since 1996 no SRM importations have been allowed due to the national rule on the removal of SRM.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Since 1990 there has been a passive surveillance programme in place. From 1998 to 2000 an active monitoring programme was introduced based on a sample size and directed at regions with a high cattle population. From 2001 this surveillance was enhanced as a harmonised measure within the EU.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was January 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that France be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends ' Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The dossier complied with the template of the Questionnaire for BSE Status recognition and all information was accessible

9. GERMANY

The submission from Germany sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Germany submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Germany provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Germany through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Since 1991 there has been a passive surveillance programme in place. Since 1999 there has been an active monitoring programme consistent with OIE guidelines. From 2001 this surveillance was stepped up in accordance with harmonized measures within the EU.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was May 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Germany be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  ' Controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  Germany is invited, in the annual updates to OIE, to follow closely the format recommended by OIE in the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* 2007. The *Ad hoc* Group reminds Germany of the need to ensure that the assignment of OIE surveillance points adheres strictly to the appropriate surveillance streams. In the current submission the *Ad hoc* Group noted an apparent major expansion in the assignment of animals to the clinical suspect stream. The *Ad hoc* Group notes similarly that Germany exceeds the surveillance points' requirements for type A surveillance irrespective of this issue.

10. GREECE

The submission from Greece sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Greece submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Greece provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM imports totalled 37,839 tons, mainly from Germany, Italy and Denmark from 1999 until 2004.

Cattle importation into Greece in the period 1999 –2006 originated mainly from the EU (16 countries) as well as other European countries, and from other countries or territories which are not clearly specified. The annual total imports varied between 76,640 (1999) and 82,667 (2006) head of cattle, with a total of 323,052 from BSE affected countries (15% breeding heifers and cows).

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Greece through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Cattle production in Greece is mainly based upon extensive farming practices, and according to the dossier no MBM has been fed to cattle during the past 8 years. Greece also has a very large private sector production of pigs and poultry. In December 1994 a ban on feeding ruminants with ruminant proteins was implemented. Rendering controls in effect since 1997 comply with EU legislation.

Based on the information provided the *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a declining risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

Greece has a cattle population of about 350,000 adult animals (E.U.-2005), requiring the attainment of 60,000 surveillance points in accordance with a type A application. With the data provided for six years (2001-2006) and including all the clinical suspects tested for BSE, Greece reaches approximately 51.000 surveillance points. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that by December 31st 2007 the surveillance undertaken will meet the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1992 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Passive surveillance oriented towards identification of cattle showing clinical symptoms suggestive of the disease and proper follow-up investigation of such suspect cases with a view to confirm or rule out BSE was carried out in the period 1997 until 2000, progressing actively since in concert with EU regulations.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Approved rapid tests are being used en active monitoring since 2001.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban on animals is focused on renderers, feed mills, storage facilities and farms, but the information in terms of infractions was not sufficiently detailed.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

One BSE case, born November 1996, was detected in 2001.

Uncertainty regarding the national origin of this animal has precluded the application of controls to the birth and feed cohorts in accordance with the chapter 2.3.13. of the *Terrestrial Code*

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided above, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Greece be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements

  Greece is invited to provide updates and further information on particularly the following issues: control and audit of the feed ban provisions and more specific data on surveillance efforts (especially on clinical suspects) and the surveillance tables, which should be prepared in accordance with Appendix 3.8.4.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group notes that even if Greece's cattle production is mainly extensive, and the dossier permits a general conclusion regarding the existing situation, future reports should include greater detail in respect of surveillance and feed ban controls. Greece is invited, in the annual updates to OIE, to follow closely the format recommended by OIE in the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code* 2007.

11. HUNGARY

The submission from Hungary sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Hungary submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Import of MBM and other sources of animal proteins occurred from European and extra-European infected countries at least until 2004.

Hungary during 2000-2006 imported more than 92,000 cattle animals from European countries including BSE infected ones. Approximately 25,000 of the imported cattle are still in the country, while 51884 have been re-exported and the remaining were slaughtered or died.

Various other products of animal origin (beef, offal, etc.) were imported, but a full evaluation of the risk posed by these imports is impossible because many names were provided in Hungarian without a translation into one of the OIE official languages.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Hungary through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Since 1990 the production of feedstuff for ruminants containing ruminant proteins has been prohibited. Since 1997 the feeding of mammalian proteins to ruminants has been forbidden. In 2001 animal proteins (excluding milk and milk powder) were restricted from ruminant nutrition and in July 2003 from nutrition of all farmed animals. In 2001, MBM originating from dead animals or from slaughtered ruminants was excluded from the feeding of farmed animals. Since April 2001 imported MBM has been restricted to pet-food production.

Animal by-products have been inactivated at 133°/20´/3 bar since 1997. SRM removal has been in place since April 2001.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

All relevant categories are considered in the active surveillance, which started in 2001. A total of 101,907 surveillance points was reached. Hungary needs to conduct a type A surveillance and has an adult cattle population about 350,000 animals.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5

Awareness programme

Awareness program and scientific/expert seminars started in 1991. Training seminars for field veterinarians started in 1996. Since October 2001, all county animal health and food control stations have organized training for the veterinarians, farmers and workers in the cattle farms and abattoirs.

Compulsory notification and identification

Neurological signs in ruminants are also notifiable as rabies suspects and, since 1989, these animals were investigated for TSEs. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1995 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Before 2001 BSE surveillance was only of the passive type. Surveillance started in 1989 (before BSE became compulsorily notifiable in the country) by means of the histopathologic investigation of the brains of animals reported with nervous symptoms, and irrespective of any other existing diagnosis. In 1995 the disease became notifiable.

The active surveillance, started in March 2001, included all the surveillance streams considered in the OIE *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

Laboratory examination is performed at the Veterinary Diagnostic Directorate (the National Reference Laboratory) and its two regional labs. Tests employed (Rapid tests, Histopathology, IHC, Westernblot) are in accordance with the OIE *Terrestrial Manual*.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

All existing renderers and feed-mills are inspected several times a year, at least since 1999 (first year for which data are provided). Laboratory tests are applied to investigate cross-contamination (ELISA before 31st December 2002, microscopic method thereafter). In a few cases (mainly in case of imported fishmeal) cross-contamination was detected.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the Country

No case of BSE has been detected in Hungary.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'BSE 'controlled risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Hungary be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'
- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

12. ICELAND

The submission from Iceland sought generic assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Iceland submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Iceland did not provide a detailed description of its national Veterinary Services.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a negligible risk that the BSE agent entered Iceland through imported commodities.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a negligible risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group found it necessary to extrapolate from Table 1 in Appendix 3.8.4 of the *Terrestrial Code* in order to accommodate the small size (25'000 cattle over 24 month) of the Icelandic cattle population. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken by Iceland will meet by December 31, 2007 the minimum requirements of type B surveillance according to the *Ad hoc* Group's extrapolation from Table 1 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1993 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the on-farm surveillance conducted in Iceland is a reflection of the free provision by the Official Veterinary Services of diagnostic field investigations to all farms. Despite this provision, the *Ad hoc* Group notes the virtual absence of fallen stock and emergency slaughter surveillance stream entries.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

No BSE case has been diagnosed in Iceland

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Iceland be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Negligible BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'negligible BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'negligible BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements

  The Ad hoc Group reminds Iceland of the necessity to sample at least three surveillance streams in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 3.8.4. of the *Terrestrial Code*.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group invites Iceland to review and report on the assignment of cattle by surveillance stream. The *Ad hoc* Group makes particular reference to the practice of identifying suspect animals on farm but sampling them at slaughterhouses. The *Ad hoc* Group questions whether the virtual absence of emergency slaughter and fallen stock reflects a misclassification of such animals as healthy slaughter. The *Ad hoc* Group requests that Iceland submit by mid-December the results of surveillance conducted in 2007.

13. IRELAND

The submission from Ireland sought generic assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Ireland submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Ireland provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Risk of introduction was very low during the last eight years. Nevertheless, the *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Ireland through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Ireland had many BSE cases in the past, but now the risk of recycling and amplification is minimised by the adoption of EU legislation. SRM are removed since 1997; since 2000 all positive animals are incinerated. A ruminant to ruminant feed ban is in force since 1990, extended to a mammalian protein ban to all farmed animals in 2001.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The type A surveillance target was reached in 2001. All surveillance streams foreseen by the *Terrestrial Code* are represented.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5

Awareness programme

A program has been in place since 1996. Targets of training are: farmers, veterinarians and meat plant staff that are likely to deal with BSE suspects. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1989 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Until 2000 surveillance was only passive. Active surveillance has been in place since the availability of rapid tests in 2000. All fallen stock >24 months old, all risk categories >24 months old and all animals >30 months old slaughtered for human consumption are tested using rapid tests.

Laboratory examination

Rapid tests are performed in approved private laboratories. Approval and auditing are done by the National Reference Laboratory. Rapid tests performed are those approved by the European Commission. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

Weekly inspections are performed in Cat. 1 rendering plants, and risk based inspections (with sampling) of feed-mills, farms producing concentrate feedstuff, and importers. Industry applies a voluntary testing of all imported lots withholding the lot pending the laboratory results. Positive lots are destroyed. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

A total number of 1,597 cases were recorded since 1989, with a peak in 2002. The youngest BSE case was born in September 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'BSE negligible risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 OR 'controlled risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Ireland be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The dossier complied fully with the template of the Questionnaire for BSE Status recognition and all information was easily accessible

14. ITALY

The submission from Italy sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Italy submitted a dossier which conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Italy provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Imports of MBM, cattle and bovine products have occurred in the time intervals of concern, well documented, from multiple nations within and beyond the EU, with guidance provided as to the limitations of coding MBM content and nature when shipments represented intra-Community commerce. MBM volumes, sources and destinations were provided but composition was unavailable. Documentation in respect of all commodities included the provisions applied to intra-Community sources (e.g.plant certification based for MBM) and third nation sources (e.g. certification of MBM to EU standards, inspection on arrival with redirection to alternate disposal if circumstances warrant).

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Italy through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Documentation described the integration of the imported products, with considerable volumes from France, with appropriate EU-directed controls, into the domestic production and consumption streams. The description included summary information on renderers and feed mill examinations employing visual inspections and microscopy, with reference to the appropriate response to violations, revealing a generally positive trend in contamination reduction and adherence to regulations. Additional statistical, analytical material provided further evidence of the influence of these trends on the underlying prevalence of BSE.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

Italy was particularly forthcoming in its provision of statistical facts and analyses regarding its active and passive surveillance program facets.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation of the curriculum, methods and target audience was provided to confirm an awareness program officially launched in 2000 in concert with EU directives but in evolution nationally since the emergence of the BSE issue.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

EU-recognized ID and electronic database system and herd registries support investigations.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

In its well-documented application to all surveillance streams, incorporating volumes well above those required, the BSE monitoring and surveillance system meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The laboratory system and methodology have been fully compliant with OIE and EU guidance and directives, throughout the surveillance interval.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The documentation referred to earlier and the prelude to the questionnaire provide legislative, organizational and statistical evidence of inspections and testing indicative of control and audit of the feed ban.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

A fully detailed description was provided of all salient information surrounding positive cases and their disposition.

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was January 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Italy be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group regrets that Italy did not present feed control statistics in format of tables 1.5.4 and 1.5.5. Although some of the detail regarding individual plant controls was absent, the generally transparent, abundant and analytical documentation compensated in other areas which facilitated assessment.

15. LATVIA

The submission from Latvia sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Latvia submitted a dossier which conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM was imported from BSE-risk countries in the past 8 years. There was no information about species composition of MBM, which was however certified as efficiently rendered. Most was MBM imported for pet food and fur feeding.

Cattle were imported from BSE-risk countries in the past 7 years, mainly from Estonia and Lithuania dedicated to immediate slaughter and for breeding from several European countries.

Based on the information provided regarding importation of considerable quantities of commodities (meat offal) from BSE-affected countries, the *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent could have entered the country.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

A ruminant to ruminant feed ban came into force in 1990, which was enhanced in 2001 to a mammalian to farm animal ban. In 2001 EU endorsed rendering parameters were introduced.

Since 2004, SRM has not been used in feed.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there was a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3. of Appendix 3.8.4. on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–4

Awareness programme

First information about BSE was distributed in 1990, since 1993 regular seminars have been held. More intensive information has been made available since 2000.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and identification

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 (USSR) and 1992 (Latvia) respectively and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Laboratory examination

National diagnostic centre (reference laboratory) used histopathology (1997-2001), in 2001 rapid tests were introduced.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the minimum requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance

No BSE case has been reported in Latvia

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) Compliance with Conditions for 'BSE negligible risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 OR 'controlled risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Taking into account the outcome of the risk assessment and the information provided on other requirements, it is the recommendation of the Ad hoc Group that Latvia be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk'.

e) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends Latvia as 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

16. LITHUANIA

The submission from Lithuania sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Lithuania submitted a dossier which conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Lithuania provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Sources, composition and destination were documented for some but not all of the thousands of tons of MBM imported during the last eight years under provisions described as paralleling those of the EU before their formal adoption upon Lithuania's accession in 2004. Cattle imports, including those from Eastern Europe, were based on the absence of recognized BSE in the preceding five years and targeted measures aimed at preventing entry of animals of UK lineage. Importations of casings, beef and offal reflected similar origins and controls.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Lithuania through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The control of the entry of imported and domestic commodities into the feed chain, the exposure of domestic stock to feedstuffs bearing MBM of ruminant and mammalian origin, as well as the regulatory and diagnostic approaches to renderers and feed mills generally parallelled those of the EU from the early 1990s through to their adoption in 2004 upon Lithuania's accession.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

Notwithstanding adherence to EU directives and OIE guidance, the reliance upon rabies-negative clinical suspects, the continuing overwhelming source of surveillance points, leaves the majority of surveillance accumulation subject to the underlying distribution of rabies specimen harvest in respect of geographical representation. Surveillance information on clinical suspects was deficient in total in this respect. Notwithstanding conformity to EU and OIE-guided distribution by clinical stream, the number of clinical suspects by 2004 exceeded by two to three times that absolute level which might be anticipated for an

adult population of the size reported in the country's submission, suggesting a potential lack of specificity in the clinical stream allocation. The relative increase over time suggested the same aberration. Subject to the preceding comments, the points exceed those required in type A surveillance in the adult population size identified in the submission.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation of curriculum and target audience was provided to confirm an awareness program officially launched in 2000, following EU standards since, if not preceding, accession to membership in 2004. The contingency program was documented, it has been updated periodically since 2003.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

Generic reference (2003) was made to monetary and judicial incentives for compliance and notification of outbreaks of all diseases, without specific BSE provisions.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1992 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Initiated in 2000, amended in 2002 and fully EU-compliant by accession in 2004, the system employs age selection for testing by reference to a national database which has incorporated bovine passports since 2000.

Laboratory examination

At the ISO-accredited National Veterinary Services laboratory, EU-approved protocols for passive surveillance have been followed since 1998, including progression in 2001 to active surveillance employing rapid tests, all the preceding based on OIE guidance.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country

No birth cohort has been reported affected by BSE.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Lithuania be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends Latvia as 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements

  The Ad hoc Group requests that the accuracy of allocation of specimens to the clinical suspect stream be reviewed.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  Although details on clinical surveillance suspects were incomplete in several areas, generally transparent documentation, which adhered to the template, otherwise facilitated assessment.

17. LUXEMBOURG

The submission from Luxembourg sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Luxembourg submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent.

Taking into account that no MBM, greaves or products of bovine origin have been imported at least since 1999, the BSE agent only could have entered with the importation of potentially infected live cattle. During this period of time 30051 cattle have been imported from different EU Member States countries and two cattle from Canada

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Luxembourg through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

There are no rendering plants or feed mill plants processing bovine material.

MBM has not been used since 1990 for ruminants. The use of mammalian protein was banned in 1994 and the use of processed animal proteins in feeds in 2001.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5

Awareness programme

The awareness programme, in place since 1997 and reinforced in 2000-2001, meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and identification

BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since September1990 and the *Ad hoc* Group has concluded that the system for compulsory notification and identification meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

The surveillance programme complies with the guidelines in Appendix 3.8.4. of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

Two laboratories are authorised for rapid tests and the Belgian National Reference Laboratory (CERVA) acts as National Reference Laboratory for Luxembourg. The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

Controls to detect possible frauds are carried out: 10% feed mills, 40% farmers and 50% feed dealers. 517 tests have been conducted in feed during the last 8 years, with 50 positives results. The last positive test of feed occurred in 2001.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

Three BSE cases have been detected in Luxembourg; the youngest BSE case was born in November 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Taking into account the outcome of the risk assessment, the surveillance and the information provided on other requirements, it is the recommendation of the Ad hoc Group that Luxembourg be regarded as meeting the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 Terrestrial Code as 'Controlled BSE Risk'

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends Luxembourg as 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

18. MALTA

The submission from Malta sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Malta submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Malta provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that the risk can not be considered negligible and that the BSE agent could have entered Malta through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

Carcasses of fallen stock and SRM have been incinerated under the control of the Veterinary services, there has been no rendering and MBM has not been fed to ruminants within the past 8 years.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group found it necessary to extrapolate from table 1 in Appendix 3.8.4 of the *Terrestrial Code* in order to accommodate the small size (8700 cattle over 24 months) of the Maltese cattle population.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken by Malta will meet by December 31, 2007 the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to the *Ad hoc* Group's extrapolation from Table 1 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since February 2004 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that surveillance point accumulation in Malta included all but the clinical stream, raising the question as to the minimal number of such animals in this small population and whether adequate attention has been paid to that facet of the surveillance programme. The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the distribution by age within the fallen stock and casualty slaughter stream was assigned to the youngest age category of table 2 of Appendix 3.8.4. of the *Terrestrial Code*. The *Ad hoc* Group questioned whether this reflected the absence of knowledge of the individual ages of the tested animals.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

No cases of BSE were reported in Malta

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Malta be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group suggests that Malta might gain surveillance advantage through the application of increasing resources to passive surveillance and the accurate recording of the ages of tested animals. Malta should submit by mid-December the results of surveillance conducted in 2007.

19. The NETHERLANDS

The submission from The Netherlands sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The Netherlands submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

The Netherlands provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM imports have taken place but decreased considerably since 2000. Imports were mainly from Germany, Belgium, Ireland and France, as well as Australia and New Zealand. 2,918 million bovine animals were imported between 1999-2005, mainly from other EU Member States for veal production (slaughtered at 6 -12 months of age). 246,940 bovine animals were imported for immediate slaughter.

Taking into account the origin and trade conditions applicable, the risk for the introduction of the BSE agent since 1999 is considered low.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered The Netherlands through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Rendering practices (four parameters) based on EU regulations have been in place since the early 1990's with a legal basis since 1997. A ruminant to ruminant feed ban has been in place since 1989. This feed ban was extended to a mammalian feed ban to ruminants in 1994. From 1 January 2001 a total feed ban has been in place for all farmed animals. Since 1997 SRM has been removed from the food and feed chains. The list has evolved over the following years with full harmonisation with EU rules since 2000.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

During the interval of 1990 to 2000, tests were conducted only on cattle showing clinical signs. This passive surveillance approach was enhanced to an active surveillance programme in January 2001, fully harmonized with EU regulations and requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was February 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that The Netherlands be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  ' Controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

20. NORWAY

The submission from Norway sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as negligible BSE risk as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Norway submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Norway provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a negligible risk that the BSE agent entered Norway through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1991 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

In its well-documented application to all surveillance streams, the BSE monitoring and surveillance system meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban have been in force throughout the last 8 years.

d) BSE history in the country:

BSE has not been recorded in Norway.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Norway be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Negligible BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends negligible BSE risk

SCAD message to country

- Status

  negligible BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements

  n.a.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The *Ad hoc* Group compliments Norway for the thorough and transparent nature of its application which complied fully with the template of the Questionnaire for BSE Status recognition.

21. POLAND

The submission from Poland sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Poland submitted a dossier generally complying with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

There were imports of MBM from different EU Member States (Belgium, Estonia, United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy). On 6 February 2001 the importation and transit of MBM was completely prohibited.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Poland through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

Since 1999 there has been a ban on using MBM in feed for ruminants. Until 1 November 2001 MBM could be used to feed poultry and pigs. Total feed ban provisions for all farmed animals have applied since that date. Since 2001 the removal of SRM has been in place.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1997 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

During the period of 1996 to 2000, tests were conducted only on rabies negative cattle showing persistent clinical signs refractory to treatment.

In 2001 testing was expanded to all OIE risk groups, incorporating 3% of clinically healthy cattle at routine slaughter.

Since November 2001 testing protocols have adhered to EU regulations and the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was January 2003.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Poland be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

Recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends ' Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

22. PORTUGAL

The submission from Portugal sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Portugal submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Portugal provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control. There are special regulations for the Autonomous Regions of the Madeira and Azores Islands.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM has not been imported during the past 8 years, except as pet food mainly from third countries of the Americas, Asia and Australia. The report provides information concerning importation of products of bovine origin from third countries, and some of these imports could be considered risk materials. The documentation presented of cattle importation into Portugal during the period of 1998 to 2006 refers only to animals imported from Switzerland.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered the Portugal through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

In Portugal the use of MBM or products containing MBM were banned from feedstuffs in 1994 (except pet food). Bovine SRM of any origin were banned from entering the animal feed at the beginning of 1997. Since 2003 a system for the collection of bovine fallen stock has been implemented, correcting a previous situation by which the carcasses of fallen stock were buried “in place”.

The Autonomous Region of the Azores benefits from derogation on the destruction of SRM and substances considered unfit for human consumption.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country’s cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Surveillance has taken place since 1990 on a passive, clinical basis, progressing to active surveillance in concert with EU provisions.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*, with good quality control amongst the different laboratories and different laboratory techniques.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The first indigenous case was reported in 1994. The number of cases until the end of 2005 totalled 1,002. Cases of BSE have been detected in the Azores Autonomous Region since 2002. The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was October 2002.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Portugal be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements

  Portugal is invited to provide more information needed from the Autonomous Regions of the Madeira and Azores Islands and their trade activites.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

23. SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The submission from the Slovak Republic sought status assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Slovakia submitted a dossier which conforming generally with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

The Slovak Republic did not provide a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered the Slovak Republic through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance for a population of 200,000-400,000 over two years of age, according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1993 in the Slovak Republic and was already compulsory since 1991 in Czechoslovakia and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Passive surveillance has been carried out since 1995. Active surveillance has been carried out since 1996 as a consequence of decisions taken within the EU.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was February 2001. Almost 30% of the cases were born in 2000 or 2001.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Slovak Republic be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'.

- annual update, specific requirements

  The Ad hoc Group requests that Slovakia continue to provide information on the dates of birth of possible future BSE cases.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

24. SLOVENIA

The submission from Slovenia sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Slovenia submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Slovenia provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in prospect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

MBM was imported from BSE-risk countries Germany, Croatia and Slovakia. No information is available concerning species composition within the imported MBM.

Cattle-imports from BSE-risk countries were recorded, mainly Poland and Hungary. Half of the imported cattle were for immediate slaughter, the others for breeding.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Slovenia through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

In 1981 efficient rendering parameters were introduced (only 1 rendering plant in the country). A mammalian MBM to ruminant feed ban came into force in 1996, which was enhanced in 2001 to a mammalian to farm animal ban. Since 2001 SRM in feed has been forbidden.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Information concerning BSE has been distributed since 1996, with regular updates.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1995 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was June 2000.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Slovenia be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'.
- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

25. SPAIN

The submission from Spain sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Spain submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Spain provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

A vigorous and thorough risk assessment has been undertaken, taking into account all known pathways for BSE exposure, and in accordance with criteria specified under this article. In the period under study, MBM exposure comprised imports mainly from EU countries, smaller quantities from other countries.

Cattle imports into Spain during the period of 2000 to 2006 originated mainly from the EU as well as other European countries, and from other countries. The documents submitted indicate that there has been good follow up and traceability concerning these animals.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Spain through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since March 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

Testing has taken place since 1990 on a passive, clinical basis, progressing actively since in concert with EU provisions.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*, with good quality control amongst the different laboratories and different laboratory technique.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The first case was declared in November 2000. Spain has shown a decreasing number of outbreaks in the last 3 years. The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was January 2002.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Spain be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as "Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Controlled BSE risk

- annual update, specific requirements
- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

26. SWEDEN

The submission from Sweden sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. Sweden submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

Imports of MBM, live cattle and biologics of bovine origin were documented for the interval of interest from EU Member States and other countries of low BSE risk. In response to a 2004 GBR assessment, Sweden had conducted an in depth investigation of imported commodities and provided this detailed evidence of their composition and disposition to the *Ad hoc* Group.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered Sweden through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The dossier documented adherence to EU directives in respect of imported and domestic commodities, including a risk assessment based on approved EU methodology which indicated the negligible risk to the feed system represented by imports during the interval of interest. Of historical, epidemiological significance, in advance of BSE-directed provisions, was the application since the 1980s of an animal welfare-based provision that excluded fallen stock from feedstuffs.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The dossier employed a BSurvE model examination of surveillance undertaken across all surveillance streams.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation was provided to confirm a longstanding (since 1994) and broadly based training in the veterinary, agricultural and service sectors, including examples of the materials applied and reference to the occupational breadth of the sectors addressed.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

BSE is notifiable, with judicial incentives in place in respect of both compliance and notification. Since accession to the EU in 1995, all associated directives have been adopted. The national identification plan in effect is that characteristic of the EU directives in that regard, with individual universal tagging, herd registries and an electronic central database referable in respect of selecting testing candidates at slaughter or in other surveillance streams.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1990 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

In its well-documented application to all surveillance streams, the BSE monitoring and surveillance system meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

Documentation was provided that described compliance with the EU-mandated level of control and audit which has resulted in a continuous improvement in the feed ban throughout Sweden's membership since 1995 in the EU, along a path parallel to that of other EU member countries.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

The only birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was 1994, in the form of a single animal born that year.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'negligible / 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.3 / Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that Sweden be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Negligible BSE risk'.

f) Conclusions

recommended status

Negligible BSE risk.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  Negligible BSE risk.

- annual update, specific requirements

  n.a.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  Review was facilitated by the provision of transparent documentation which closely adhered to the assessment template, with ample reference material included.

27. UNITED KINGDOM

The submission from the United Kingdom sought assessment against the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*. The United Kingdom submitted a dossier conformed fully with the guidelines circulated for countries wishing to make a formal submission for evaluation of their BSE status against the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

The United Kingdom provided a description of its national Veterinary Services with particular reference to the allocation of legislation and organization in respect of BSE prevention, detection and control.

a) Section 1: Risk Assessment — Article 2.3.13.2 point 1

Risk assessment for introduction of the BSE agent

The United Kingdom imported quantified MBM, cattle and bovine products during the interval of interest from multiple countries within and beyond the EU, applying the documented, evolving policies of EU member countries in place throughout the time period. While sources and volumes of imported MBM were described, as in most countries its composition could often not be determined.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the release assessment was that there is a risk that the BSE agent entered the United Kingdom through one or more of the imported commodities from BSE-affected countries.

Risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent

The dossier detailed the application of special measures unique to the United Kingdom's central role in the international disease outbreak and its high domestic prevalence relative to that of other infected countries. Documentation also described the evolving, parallel control of indigenous and imported commodities in conformity with the EU directives which followed upon those initial measures imposed by the United Kingdom itself. The rapidly declining domestic prevalence during the interval of interest raised the relative importance of all the preceding measures in mitigating the possible impact of the recognized, growing prevalence in external sources.

The *Ad hoc* Group considered that the conclusion of the exposure assessment was that there is a decreasing risk of recycling and amplification of the BSE agent if it were present in the country's cattle population.

b) Surveillance according to Appendix 3.8.4.

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the surveillance undertaken meets the minimum requirements of type A surveillance according to Article 3.8.4.3 of the Appendix 3.8.4 on surveillance for BSE in the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

c) Other requirements — Article 2.3.13.2 points 2–5:

Awareness programme

Evidence and documentation of curriculum, methods and target audience numbers was provided to confirm an awareness program officially launched in the late 1980s, through to and in concert with EU directives to the current day in the face of an ever-decreasing percentage of BSE findings among the clinical suspect stream. The contingency program and its continuous evolution, in respect of the SEAC advisory group and OIE guidance, was documented.

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the awareness programme meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Compulsory notification and investigation

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that BSE has been declared a notifiable disease under relevant legislation since 1988 and concluded that the system for compulsory notification and investigation meets the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

BSE monitoring and surveillance system

The system is fully EU and OIE compliant, incorporating measures commensurate with the special situation the United Kingdom represents in respect of prevalence and its compartmentalization of the disease by date of birth, whereby special mitigative measures are applied to animals born before August, 1996 by virtue of the greater BSE risk they represent.

Laboratory examination

The *Ad hoc* Group concluded that the arrangements for laboratory examination meet the requirements of the 2007 *Terrestrial Code*.

Appropriate level of control and audit of the feed ban

The *Ad hoc* Group noted that the appropriate legislation, control and audit of the proper implementation of the feed ban are in force.

d) BSE history in the country:

A comprehensive description was provided of the individual BSE cases encountered during the interval of interest. The youngest birth cohort reported as affected by BSE was May 2000.

e) Compliance with Conditions for 'Controlled BSE risk' Status - Article 2.3.13.4

Based on the information provided, it is the recommendation of the *Ad hoc* Group that the United Kingdom be regarded as having met the requirements for recognition as complying with the 2007 BSE Chapter of the *Terrestrial Code* as 'Controlled BSE risk' .

f) Conclusions

recommended status

The *Ad hoc* Group recommends 'Controlled BSE risk'.

SCAD message to country

- Status

  'Controlled BSE risk'

- annual update, specific requirements

  The *Ad hoc* Group requests that the United Kingdom continue to provide surveillance information of the detailed nature included in this report which facilitates the birth cohort-specific evaluations instructive in respect of the compartmentalization claimed.

- specific comments with regard to the submitted dossier

  The transparency of documentation, in particular the provision of the 2006 report to the EU, as well as adherence to the questionnaire template facilitated the assessment.

28. OTHER COUNTRIES

The Group assessed two additional country dossiers which did not meet the requirements, neither for 'negligible BSE risk' nor for 'controlled BSE risk'. These dossiers were referred back to the corresponding countries.

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…/Appendices

Appendix I

OIE *AD HOC* GROUP FOR EVALUATION OF COUNTRY STATUS FOR BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE *TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH CODE*

Paris, 16–20 July 2007

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Agenda

1. Adoption of agenda and appointment of rapporteur(s)

2. Explanation of the working procedures now applied in the Scientific and Technical Department for the evaluation and processing of country applications for BSE.

3. Review of Country Status Applications for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (EU member countries)

Austria	Finland	Latvia	Romania
Belgium	France	Lithuania	Slovak Republic
Bulgaria	Germany	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Cyprus	Greece	Malta*	Spain
Czech Republic	Hungary	Netherlands	Sweden
Denmark	Ireland	Poland	United Kingdom
Estonia	Italy	Portugal	

* received 04 July

4. Future working programme for 2007/2008

- Current *Terrestrial Code* chapters for BSE and scrapie in view of alleged atypical BSE and atypical scrapie, evaluation of scientific justification

- Additional applications for BSE risk country classification

5. Other matters

a) For information: Commenting letters of Korea, China, Taipei China and Japan on BSE country classifications recommended by the ad hoc Group.

b) Format of report of ad hoc Group and the need to dispatch report without unnecessary delay to Member Countries.

c) Proposal of International Committee for submission of Scientific Commission decisions to Member Countries during the year and need for expedited procedures.

6. Adoption of draft report

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OIE *AD HOC* GROUP FOR EVALUATION OF COUNTRY STATUS FOR BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE *TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH CODE*

Paris, 12–14 September 2007

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Agenda

1. **Adoption of agenda and appointment of rapporteur(s)**

2. **Review of preliminary evaluated Country Status Applications for BSE (EU Member States) taking into account additional information submitted by Member Countries**

3. **Review of new Country Status Applications for BSE risk evaluation**

   - Norway (received)
   - Iceland (received)
   - Paraguay (announced)

4. **Re-assessment of China Taipei's Country Status Applications for BSE**

5. **Future working programme for 2008**

   - Additional applications for BSE risk country classification

6. **Other matters**

7. **Finalization and adoption of the joint draft report (July and September meeting)**

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Appendix II

OIE *AD HOC* GROUP FOR EVALUATION OF COUNTRY STATUS FOR BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE *TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL HEALTH CODE*

Paris, 16–20 July 2007

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Paris, 12–14 September 2007

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