

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Consultation on a new independent body for animal health: *A modern governance and funding structure for tackling animal diseases*

Annex 5 - A description of the animal health delivery landscape

Animal Health and Welfare – Roles and Responsibilities of Current Delivery Partners

The Animal Health & Welfare delivery landscape is a complex one with organisations ranging from large ones such as Animal Health to others who contribute in a smaller but equally important way.

Animal Health (AH)

1. The State Veterinary Service, now known as Animal Health (AH), became an Executive Agency of Defra on 1 April 2005. Animal Health is a GB wide organisation providing agreed public health, animal health and welfare and international trade services.
2. Their general responsibilities, mostly of a statutory nature, include:
 - preparing and exercising contingency plans and dealing with incursions of exotic disease;
 - licensing markets and shows and ensuring that licence conditions are met;
 - advising farmers on disease prevention, welfare and requirements for importing and exporting;
 - inspecting welfare standards, including investigating complaints, on farms, in markets and livestock vehicles;
 - implementing control programmes for endemic diseases such as TB and brucellosis;
 - operating the National Scrapie Plan;
 - Maintaining the Egg Marketing inspectorate and Dairy Hygiene Service
 - inspecting compliance at animal by-products premises;
 - arranging health certificates for animal exporters in conjunction with AH-appointed Local Veterinary Inspectors;
 - working with port and airport operators to provide advice on, and audit the import process of animals and animal products;
 - inspections of and authorisation for quarantine premises and carrying agents;
 - conducting Pets Travel Scheme (PETS) quality assurance checks at port of entry, and controlling the operational aspects of PETS;

- taking and testing samples from animals to detect diseases or residues of veterinary medicines; and
- liaising and working with local and regional stakeholders and other delivery partners, such as providing expert advice to Local Authorities.

Official Veterinarians (OVs)

3. Local Veterinary Inspectors (LVIs) are veterinary surgeons working in private practice; there are currently around 7,000 of them. They are appointed by AH to carry out, as agents of the Secretary of State, certain official duties throughout GB under the requirements of the Animal Health Act 1981 such as export certification and blood testing. Their activities are directed and monitored by AH.

Local Authorities (LAs)

4. Local Authorities provide an important function in delivering Central Government policy initiatives, while ensuring that all services are tailored to the individual needs of each local community. Local Authorities are directly accountable to the local populace and therefore endeavour to ensure that local services are delivered to maximum effect.
5. One of the numerous services that Local Authorities provide is the comprehensive delivery and enforcement of animal health and welfare policies. They proactively carry out risk-based inspections of:
 - farming premises;
 - livestock markets and shows;
 - slaughterhouses; and
 - vehicles transporting live animals.
6. Similarly, they are responsible for enforcement of legislation relating to:
 - disease control;
 - animal identification;
 - bio-security;
 - animal by-products;
 - animal gatherings;
 - livestock movements;
 - standstill arrangements; and
 - animal welfare.
7. Also inspection and licensing responsibilities for
 - pet shops
 - animals boarding premises
 - riding establishments

8. Local Authorities also complete appropriate investigations in the event of non-compliance, which may lead to prosecution where appropriate.
9. Defra, the Welsh Assembly Government and LACORS have produced a “Framework Agreement” which aims to assist in the delivery of improved animal health and welfare services through providing structure and consistency. It provides a base-line for comprehensive service planning and delivery on a risk-based approach. This agreement is under review, in conjunction with Animal Health, in the light of the Eves review.
10. As part of the Framework Agreement, Local Authorities are required to report all animal health and welfare enforcement activities, actions and results on a national database - the Animal Health and Welfare Management & Enforcement System (AMES). This assists in the provision of effective services by identifying local and national compliance trends as well as facilitating the benchmarking of service delivery and providing for a more consistent and joined up approach to enforcement.

Local Authority Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)

11. Local Authority Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) supports and represents Local Government throughout the UK in relation to arrangements for regulatory services, including animal health and welfare. LACORS proactively encourages best practice and consistency by all LAs in their activities as statutory enforcement body for animal health and welfare policy. LACORS has communication links to LAs through a secure access website and a system of regional and national animal health and welfare expert panels.

Food Standards Agency (FSA)

12. The Food Standards Agency is a non-Ministerial Department with UK wide responsibility for food safety. The FSA does not carry out any inspections itself; Local Authorities and the MHS enforce the regulation for which the FSA is responsible.
13. The Agency’s key priorities include the improvement of food safety, food law enforcement and dietary health, and the promotion of honest and informative labelling on food and best practice within the food industry.
14. It is working towards providing better controls on imported food products. Currently the FSA provides ad-hoc advice to Defra on public health aspects of its policies, although there is no statutory requirement for Defra to seek their input.

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA), incorporating the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS)

15. The Rural Payments Agency is an Executive Agency of Defra. It is the single paying agency responsible for Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) schemes in England and certain schemes throughout the UK. The RPA inspectorate carries out checks relating to payment schemes and scrutiny to ensure EU accreditation requirements are met.
16. The British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) is part of the RPA. It is the specialised cattle-tracing organisation for GB, with responsibility for enforcing the Cattle Identification Regulations. Its functions are to:
- maintain a register of movements, births, deaths and imports of cattle, to be used for animal health and subsidy control purposes;
 - manage Ear Tag Allocation System and the Date Based Export Scheme;
 - issue cattle passports
 - record the location of individual cattle;
 - operate a helpline and provide online facilities for delivering its services;
 - coordinate the annual on-farm inspection campaign; and
 - liaise with AH on cattle welfare and identification problems.
17. In addition, the RPA undertake functions in relation livestock identification inspections and TSE surveillance of fallen stock.

The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS)

18. The Meat Hygiene Service is an Executive Agency of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with responsibility for carrying out the following functions on behalf of the FSA:
- enforcing hygiene legislation in licensed fresh meat premises;
 - carrying out ante-mortem inspection (including welfare) of all animals destined for slaughter;
 - carrying out post-mortem inspection and controls on health marking in licensed red, white and wild game meat premises;
 - enforcing hygiene controls in meat products, minced meat and meat preparation plants that are co-located in licensed slaughterhouses; and
 - enforcing in licensed fresh meat premises, controls on Specified Risk Material (SRM) and other animal by-products, and controls on the sale of meat from cattle over 30 months of age.
19. Service Level Agreements (SLA) exist between the MHS and Defra, the Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Government for the

delivery of activities relating to animal health and welfare policy in licensed meat plants in Great Britain. This work includes:

- enforcement of animal welfare rules in licensed slaughterhouses;
- collection and despatch for statutory veterinary medicines residue testing;
- detecting notifiable animal diseases and zoonoses at ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection to support veterinary disease surveillance;
- enforcement in licensed premises of emergency controls during animal disease outbreaks;
- reporting welfare concerns that would appear to originate from the farm to AH for investigation;
- carrying out and supervising sampling procedures for residues and TSE testing;
- collection of samples for various surveys into animal disease;
- provision of certain specialised functions on meat exports to 3rd countries; and
- enforcing cleansing and disinfection of vehicles at slaughterhouses (previously the responsibility of LAs)

The Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB)

20. The AHDB is a Non Departmental Public Body, responsible to Defra Ministers for its own operations and that of its wholly-owned Sector Companies (BPEX Ltd, Dairy Co Ltd, EBLEX Ltd, HDC Ltd, HGCA Ltd and PC Ltd.). AHDB is funded through the collection of levies on agricultural and horticultural producers. In livestock, this involves collecting a levy from all sheep, pigs and cattle slaughtered for consumption or exported live. The AHDB has a responsibility for establishing a long-term vision and mission statement for its activities in the sectors, for providing a set of common services to each sector and agreeing and monitoring the individual sector business plans. In general it seeks to promote greater efficiency in the industry and the associated products industry, whilst having regard to the interests of consumers and of the industry.

Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD)

21. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an Executive Agency of Defra. Its aim is to protect public health, animal health, the environment and promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of all aspects of veterinary medicines in the UK. Animal Health and Welfare within the FFG DG is VMD's principal customer within Defra.

22. The VMD has three main areas of work:

- Licensing – the assessment of applications, issuing and maintenance of Marketing Authorisations for veterinary medicines in accordance with

EC and UK legislation; pharmacovigilance for veterinary medicines through the surveillance of suspected adverse reactions and the licensing and inspection of manufacturers and wholesale distributors of veterinary medicines.

- Residues – the surveillance for residues of veterinary medicines and banned substances in home produced livestock and animal products, reporting of results and co-ordinating follow-up action.
- Policy – provision and implementation of new policy/legislation on all aspects of veterinary medicines. Providing policy advice to Defra Ministers.

Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA)

23. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) is an Executive Agency of Defra.

24. It provides a specialist veterinary and scientific resource (diagnosis, epidemiology, research) to help Defra fulfil its aims and objectives in veterinary public health and developing sustainable agriculture and food industries.

25. The aims of the VLA are to:

- deliver laboratory-based veterinary research, surveillance, veterinary scientific consultancy and laboratory testing services through a series of integrated science programmes; and
- maintain an emergency response capability in laboratory-based services.

UK Border Agency

26. The UK Border Agency is an agency of the Home Office, and is responsible for providing port and border security for the UK, and enforces customs regulations particularly with regard to animals, animal products and pathogens. They are responsible for the detection, seizure and destruction of illegally imported products of animal origin (as well as plants and plant and wood products). They are responsible for anti-smuggling controls of illegal meat and products of animal origin imported from third countries.

Port Health Authorities

27. Port Health Authorities is a UK wide organisation representing the interests of Local Authorities and Port Health Authorities with responsibilities for health controls at sea and airports, with the primary objective of preventing the introduction into the country of dangerous epidemic, contagious and infectious diseases and ensuring the wholesomeness of imported food. They are responsible for food safety and standards checks on goods presented at ports, including veterinary

checks, required by European Union (EU) law on Products of Animal Origin (POAO) at Border Inspection Posts (BIPs), to ensure animal and public health import requirements are met. They are also responsible for enforcing safeguard measures on POAO when there is an animal disease outbreak in a non-EU country.

28. They are not responsible for detecting smuggled POAO at Great Britain points of entry. If, however, they uncover illegal products in the course of their duties outside of a BIP, they issue a detection notice and seek UKBA assistance.

29. The Association is directed by an elected Executive Board and has a number of technical committees dealing with the various areas of port health work. If you wish to contribute to any of these technical committees please contact us.

Police Authorities

30. In the event of a major disease outbreak such as FMD, the police would play a role in enforcement of controls and handling problems arising during disease control and carcass disposal operations.

31. There is also close liaison with the police in Road Traffic Exercises, which are used as a means of checking compliance with transport rules and other animal movement conditions.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)

32. Defra has no formal relationship with the RSPCA but the RSPCA, and other voluntary organisations, have a role in delivering animal health and welfare aims and objectives. RSPCA carry out most non-farm enforcement work and are authorised prosecutors under the Protection of Animals Act 2000. They bring private prosecutions both in respect of farm animals and companion animals.

The Environment Agency (EA)

33. The Environment Agency's objective is "to make sure that air, land and water are looked after by everyone in today's society, so that tomorrow's generations inherit a cleaner, healthier world". In the event of a major disease outbreak such as FMD, Defra and AH would liaise closely with the EA to ensure that disease control measures and carcass disposal operations did not have a detrimental impact on the environment. They also deliver Defra environmental policy, such as the Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) measures. About 40% of their funding is from service charges to the customer.