



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



# Vetcommuniq 

Vol 6 No 1 April 2006

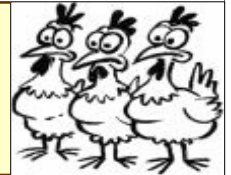
## Animal Health Committee Meeting 07, 9-11 May, 2006

Welcome to the second edition for 2006 of the Animal Health Committee's (AHC) newsletter for food animal production industry bodies. The aim of Vetcommuniq  is to improve communication links between AHC and client industry bodies.

The next face-to-face meeting will be held on 9-11 May in Perth. Face-to-face meetings are held twice each year, with the venue rotating around the States, Territories and New Zealand. The meetings are attended by the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) of the Commonwealth, States, Territories and New Zealand with representatives from Biosecurity Australia, CSIRO and Animal Health Australia (AHA) to discuss animal health issues of national importance. We also look forward to some innovative discussions with invited industry groups.



## Key items



### Avian Influenza (AI)

Biosecurity standards are at the forefront of industry and public minds. It is important to explore options to ensure that the correct biosecurity measures are being implemented in industry and other relevant groups. In the current world situation there is no room for gaps in preparedness. AHC will identify areas for further work, and EAD response mechanisms put into place. Destruction of animals during an outbreak, and staffing issues need to be addressed.

To ensure a highly effective response, forward planning is needed to be able to implement strategies and stay on top of situations when they arise. AHC is continuing to develop surveillance policies (both in domestic and wild birds). Surveillance is the best way to be sure that an outbreak is caught and dealt with promptly.

Communications between government and industry is critical in preparation for emergency response. AHC will discuss communication strategies with the view to ensure industry is kept up to date.

### Animal Welfare

The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) is a national strategy that aims to maintain and improve the high standards of animal welfare that currently exist in Australia. AHC will discuss implementation and action plans in regards to jurisdictions enforcing the strategy in their industries.

AHC will discuss animal welfare issues associated with animal traps. AHC will further consider the development of criteria for evaluation of the humaneness of other vertebrate pest controls.

AHC will also discuss the Welfare Codes Review, and consider the draft Business Plan for managing the future review and development of Australian Welfare Standards for the livestock sector.

### Exercise Eleusis - follow-up

AHC will consider the report following Exercise Eleusis held in Nov/Dec 2005. The committee will evaluate the outcomes and implications for EAD management, including AI. AHC will plan the follow-up action needed as a result of the exercise.

Vetcommuniq  can be downloaded from the web at [www.daff.gov.au/ahc](http://www.daff.gov.au/ahc)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

## National Animal Health Laboratory Strategy

AHC will consider the National Animal Health Laboratory Strategy and Work Plan.

The AHC will discuss the draft Terms of Reference and proposed representative membership for the Advisory Group.



## BJD

AHC will discuss the development of a framework for a nationally accepted assurance based trading system for BJD in goats.



The major risk of JD infection occurring in a goat herd is via introduction of infected goats into the herd. Most JD detected in goats in Australia has been BJD in dairy goats. The amended risk assessment scale recognises the risk posed by the introduction of untested dairy goats. NSW proposes that this scale form the basis of a Goat Health Statement that could be used for a national assurance based trading system for the control of Johne's disease in goats.

AHC will further discuss the proposal to split the dairy and beef sectors in regards to BJD control. AHC notes that this will enable BJD control to be targeted appropriately for each of the sectors.

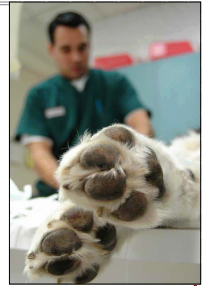
AHC will consider justification for prevalence zones, and will address the future of zones.

## Australian Veterinary Reserve

At the coming meeting AHC will further develop plans for future maintenance of the AVR. The establishment of the Australian Veterinary Reserve (AVR) is one of the major recommendations of the Rural Vets Review and a significant milestone in realising the potential of our national veterinary resource.

The AVR involves non-government veterinarians in government programs initially by providing paid training in national emergency animal disease preparedness.

The program, open to all non-government vets, complements existing government resources, developing business diversity for rural practitioners and providing opportunities for better integration of veterinary services.



## National Animal Health Surveillance Strategy

The AHC will consider development of the National Animal Health Surveillance Strategy (NAHSS) work plan. NAHSS provides the framework within which to consider Australia's surveillance requirements. It is consistent with the Australian Bio-security System for Primary Production and the Environment and forms part of the National Animal Health Strategic Framework.

Australia's current surveillance arrangements are based on contributions from both the public and private sectors. The AHC will discuss the establishment of an Advisory Group to oversee the further development and implementation of the NAHSS work plan.



## Animal Disease Incidents in Intensive Production Systems

AHC will discuss the recommendations from the out-of-session paper 22. Key points from the recommendations in the OOS22 paper include;

1. governments in Australia working towards strengthening relationships between government and intensive animal industry veterinarians;
2. governments giving consideration as to how the industry and nominated government veterinarians can be deployed and how communications can best operate in an EAD outbreak; and
3. A detailed framework for trigger point reporting of incidents in the intensive animal industries not be established until there has been a detailed study and consultation undertaken with the intensive animal industries and veterinarians.

