



# Vetcommuniqué

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## Animal Health Committee Meeting 04, 26-28 October 2004

Welcome to the third edition for 2004 of the Animal Health Committee's (AHC) newsletter for food animal production industry bodies. The aim of Vetcommuniqué is to improve communication links between AHC and client industry bodies.

The next face-to-face meeting, AHC04, will be held on 26-28 October in South Australia. 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 look forward to some innovative discussions with invited industry groups.

### *Implementation of the Review of Rural Veterinary Services (Frawley Review)*

#### **Australian Veterinary Reserve (AVR)**

AHC will discuss the employment of non-government vets in the event of a major animal disease outbreak in Australia. Reservists (the first 20 of 100) will undertake the pilot training course in late November.

Animal Health Australia has organised the training program which will be held at Tocal Agricultural College. A further 80 vets will be recruited to complete training programs next year.

Employment and training of non-government vets will be discussed at AHC04.



#### **Surveillance**

AHC will consider a report from a Frawley Steering Committee to incorporate wildlife surveillance into a National Animal Health Surveillance System (NAHSS).

A number of new diseases have emerged from wildlife in recent times making wildlife surveillance a key area requiring greater understanding by animal health authorities.

#### **Industry presentations**

AHC has invited industry representatives to address the meeting.

- ◇ Mr Greg Ludvigsen who will present on the unique features of his pig production enterprise in SA.
- ◇ Mr John Crosby, Chair, NLIS Cattle Implementation Group in SA will speak on the implementation of NLIS; and
- ◇ Dr Kevin McGrath, Chair, SA Cattle Advisory Group will discuss liaison between animal health agencies and key industry groups.

# Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness

## Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

Following the recent finalisation of FMD vaccine supply arrangements, AHC will further develop policy for FMD vaccine supply and use.

## FMD Vaccine Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

The FMD Vaccine SOPs Working Group met on 8 September to consider comprehensively the practical issues associated with FMD vaccine use and delivery in Australia. Issues discussed were storage, use, record keeping, inventory control, controlled slaughter, ABC ELISA testing. The Working Group will present draft SOPs for discussion at the meeting.

## Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Training

An effective EAD training program is of increasing importance to the enhancement of the national EAD preparedness and response capability.

Animal Health Australia has planned and budgeted for both an increase in the level and breadth of activity in this area. To manage this significantly increased workload Animal Health Australia is progressively restructuring and supplementing its training resources. AHA will present the changes to AHC.

## BSE

BSE items for discussion include —the current international situation, traceability of imported cattle, downers, progress on ruminant feed ban audits and testing and management of animals inadvertently exposed to RAM (restricted animal material).

## Emergency Relief Measures

Animal Welfare Working Group, along with Animal Health Australia, are progressing guidelines, in the form of an AUSVETPLAN manual, for welfare decisions in an emergency response. A discussion paper will provide background for deliberations.

## Avian Influenza (AI)

The global situation regarding HPAI (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza) reinforces an urgent need to review Australia's preparedness to manage an outbreak of HPAI.

Items for discussion at AHC04 include:

- ◆ the current international situation
- ◆ surveillance
- ◆ role of wildlife
- ◆ biosecurity arrangements
- ◆ Communication, human health and cross agency issues.
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## Exotic Disease Kits

Following a recent teleconference, SAFEMEAT has sought assurances from AHC that use of imported exotic disease test kits can be legislatively controlled in Australia. AHC will discuss policy for control and use in the jurisdictions.

## National Livestock Tracing Audit

An audit of national livestock tracing was conducted in August to evaluate Australia's capability for tracing cattle and to identify areas where our systems can be improved.

## Endemic Animal Disease—Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD) Scoring

The National Approach to the Management of OJD (NAMOJD) in Australia commenced on 1 July 2004. The NAMOJD describes the prevalence of OJD in various areas of Australia.

AHC has a role in determining the Prevalence Area status and will discuss field implementation of the new national approach.



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