



Vetcommuniq 

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Animal Health Committee Meeting 09, 1-3 May, 2007

Welcome to the first edition for 2007 of the Animal Health Committee (AHC) newsletter for food animal production industry bodies. The aim of Vetcommuniq  is to improve communication links between AHC and client industry and government bodies.

The next face-to-face meeting of AHC will be 1-3 May in Brisbane, Qld. Face-to-face meetings are held twice each year, with the venue rotating between 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, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) and Animal Health Australia (AHA) to discuss animal health issues of national importance. Industry representatives also attend for specific discussion from time to time.

Key Issues

National Recognition of Veterinary Registration

A working group has developed a principles document for members input. An IT consultant has prepared a report scoping options for information sharing between states to support national recognition of veterinary registration. AHC will provide advice to Ministers on an agreed model for national recognition by November 2007.

National Animal Health Surveillance Strategy (NAHSS)

Primary Industries Standing Committee has endorsed the NAHSS and agreed for AHA to establish of a National Reference Group. AHA will provide details of two new surveillance activities for discussion at AHC.



FVO BSE Audit

The European Commission (EC) Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) conducted an evaluation of Australia's preventative measures for BSE during October 2006.

The FVO report acknowledged the general effectiveness of Australia's BSE controls and made particular critical observations and comments on what are considered to be identified weaknesses.

The initial assessment is that the report is unlikely to place at risk Australia's current BSE risk ratings.

The final FVO report together with Australia's response to the draft report is expected to be posted on the EC's website sometime in April.

Key Issues

Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD)

AHC will meet with National Sheep Industry representatives to discuss the underlying principles and key technical components of an industry proposal for an industry based national approach to OJD 2007-2012.



Australian Reference Laboratory Network (ARLN)

AHC will consider a recently completed review of the Australian animal health reference laboratory network.

Issues for consideration include the form, scope and future management and funding of the ARLN.



Future Management of Animal Welfare

AHC is likely to pass on some of its responsibilities relating to animal welfare, with the formation of a new partner Animal Welfare Committee reporting to PISC. This change reflects the increasing significance and workload associated with animal welfare issues in Australia. The exact nature and structure of the new AWC have yet to be confirmed.

Avian Influenza

AHC will consider outstanding technical policy issues including the goals and requirements in relation to national poultry and wild bird surveillance, and the use of field based hand held tests.

Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) Review

AHA members have agreed to the Terms of Reference for this review. A consultant has been appointed and members have been requested to provide submissions. The consultant report is expected to be completed by mid May 2007.

AHC will discuss issues raised by jurisdictions in submissions to the review.

**Next meeting
AHC10
to be held in New South Wales
30 October-1 November 2007**

