

OCTOBER 2007

# aquaplan

2005-2010

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See page 3 for  
details of your  
representative  
on  
Aquatic  
Animal Health  
Committee

The progress and priorities of AQUAPLAN 2005-2010, Australia's National Strategic Plan for Aquatic Animal Health, were recently reviewed by stakeholders including representatives from industry, academia and the

Australian and state/territory governments.

Stakeholders were asked to provide updates on the progress of AQUAPLAN projects in which they were directly or indirectly involved, and to give priority ratings for each

project. The Aquatic Animal Health Committee, which has oversight of AQUAPLAN 2005-2010, considered stakeholder responses at its meeting in Brisbane on 3 July, and agreed on revised priority ratings for individual AQUAPLAN projects.

## 2007 Stakeholder Review

## OIE General Session, May 2007

At the 75th General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), held in Paris on 20–25 May, changes to the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* (the *Aquatic Code*), the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals* (the *Aquatic Manual*) and to the scope of OIE, were adopted.

In the *Aquatic Code*, two crustacean diseases were added to the diseases listed by the OIE: infectious myonecrosis (IMN) and white tail disease (WTD). Formal reporting obligations for IMN and WTD begin on 1 January 2008 for OIE Member Countries. Both these diseases are exotic to Australia. The OIE International Committee also agreed to place the crustacean diseases hepatopancreatic parvovirus disease (HPVD) and Mourilyan virus disease

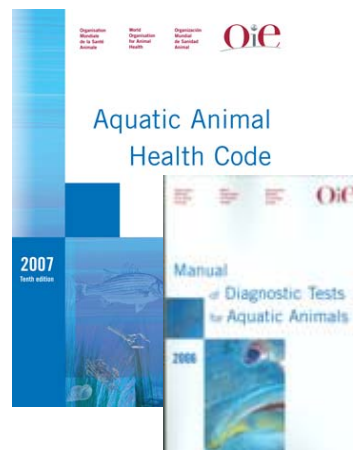
(MoVD) under study for listing, together with necrotising hepatopancreatitis (NHP), which remains listed as 'under study'.

Further changes to the *Aquatic Code* included the adoption of a new chapter on the finfish disease, koi herpesvirus disease, and revised chapters for six mollusc diseases and six crustacean diseases. The OIE International Committee also adopted revised *Aquatic Code*

chapters on zoning and compartmentalisation, and recommendations for transport.

The current versions of the *Aquatic Code* and the *Aquatic Manual* can be downloaded, free of charge, from the OIE website [http://www.oie.int/eng/publicat/en\\_normes.htm?e1d11](http://www.oie.int/eng/publicat/en_normes.htm?e1d11)

In addition to the changes adopted for the *Aquatic Code* and *Aquatic Manual*, the OIE International Committee agreed, in principle, that the OIE expand its scope to include amphibian diseases. The OIE will now reconvene its *ad hoc* group on amphibian diseases, with revised terms of reference that include the development of a list of diseases and draft chapters for the *Aquatic Animal Health Code* and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*.



# Fish Kill Protocol

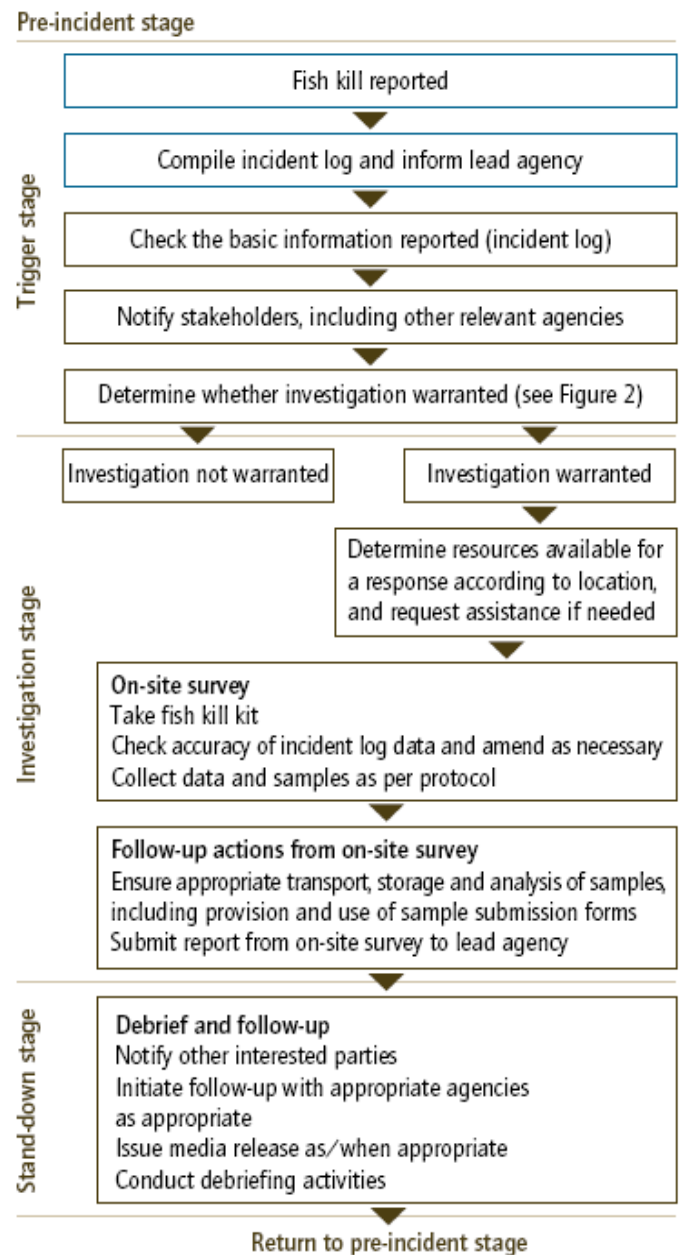
The *National Investigation and Reporting Protocol for Fish Kills* has been developed to provide a consistent national approach in the response to major fish kill incidents in marine, estuarine and freshwater environments in Australia.

The Protocol contributes to AQUAPLAN 2005-2010 outcomes, specifically *Strategy 1: Enhanced integration and scope of aquatic animal health surveillance in Australia, Objective 4*. It was developed at a national workshop of participants representing universities, Australian and state and territory government departments with responsibility for fisheries or aquaculture, environmental protection agencies and conservation organisations. It has since been endorsed by the Primary Industries Standing Committee and the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee.

Fish kill incidents (unusual mortality events in non-mammalian aquatic animals) are known to occur in natural waterways across Australia. Their occurrence may indicate significant environmental changes, disease incidents or major pollution events. However, often the causes remain unknown, preventing appropriate management decisions to reduce or eliminate the possibility of future fish kills. The Protocol sets minimum standards for the management of fish kill incidents, allowing thorough investigation to provide early warning of exotic or emerging diseases threatening Australia's aquatic ecosystems, fisheries resources or aquaculture industries.

The suggested response to a fish kill incident follows a logical process, as shown in Figure 1, which illustrates the four main stages within a continuous investigation process. The tasks detailed are advisory in nature and are provided as guiding principles. During any incident, the decision to vary or add tasks will be at the discretion of the affected jurisdiction(s). The protocol has been well received by Australian aquatic animal health specialists and industry professionals.

Figure 1 Checklist for responding to a fish kill incident



The *National Investigation and Reporting Protocol for Fish Kills* and Incident Logs are now available on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website at <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/aquatic/resources>.



**Dr Sridevi Embar-Gopinath,**  
a new member of the AAHC Secretariat

## **Aquatic Animal Health Committee**

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The Aquatic Animal Health Committee (AAHC) was established by the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) in September 2002 and is the primary industry/government interface for policy, communication and awareness related to aquatic animal health issues.

AAHC members represent the Australian, State and Northern Territory government departments with responsibility for aquatic animal health, the capture and recreational fishing industries, finfish, mollusc, and crustacean aquaculture industries, and the ornamental fish industry.

The policy work of AAHC is underpinned by the sound scientific and technical advice provided to the Committee by the National Aquatic Animal Health Technical Working Group (NAAH-TWG).

The role of AAHC is to:

- Review and refine national aquatic animal health policies and programs;
- Provide national co-ordination on identified emerging aquatic animal health issues and make recommendations for policy development and management, and facilitate the co-ordination role across the States and Territories through existing processes;
- Actively respond to identified resource requirements of national aquatic animal health policies and programs;
- Provide advice on international quarantine and import risk assessments as required;
- Provide advice and submit recommendations to the PISC and other stakeholders on those issues;
- Report on strategic issues and submit recommendations relating to AQUAPLAN and its implementation to PISC and other stakeholders;
- Provide strategic guidance on the development of aquatic animal disease diagnostics, disease emergency management planning, and disease emergency management training and incident simulation; and
- Review communication and extension strategies on aquatic animal health issues and facilitate implementation of those strategies.

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