

Minutes of the meeting of the expert group to discuss animal health requirements for the movement within the Union and the entry into the Union of poultry, captive birds and hatching eggs

19 June 2018, Brussels

1. Approval of the agenda

A preliminary agenda was circulated prior to the meeting and approved at the beginning of the meeting.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public. The Member States' and EEA countries representatives from the competent veterinary authorities participated in the meeting. The Chair noted the absence of the European Council and the European Parliament.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Introduction, opening

The Commission informed Member States that this was the last expert group meeting dedicated exclusively to poultry, captive birds and hatching eggs. In the future, documents discussed in this expert group will be presented in the expert group meetings on the animal health requirements for movements of all terrestrial animals and the expert group meetings on the animal health requirements for the entry into the Union of animals, germinal products and products of animal origin, as part of the working documents distributed for those meetings.

3.2. Presentation and discussion on the animal health requirements for the movement within the Union of poultry, hatching eggs and captive birds

The Commission noted the changes in the working document compared to the version presented in the previous meeting of the expert group in April 2018.

In relation to the definitions, the Commission informed Member States that based on the comments and information received following the expert group meeting in April, the definition of day-old chicks was amended to refer only to the age of the birds. However, a new animal health requirement was introduced that if day-old chicks are fed, the competent authority has to approve the feeding in a way that it prevents infection of day-old chicks with listed diseases. Member States welcomed the amended definition, but objected to the approval of feeding by the competent authority as too difficult and burdensome. The conclusion was to delete that provision.

The requirement for individual identification of ratites, already required for imports was also discussed.. Member States confirmed that identification of ratites is possible and that it increases transparency/traceability for certification. However, there were suggestions to reconsider such requirement for the movement to another Member State, as individual identification is mainly necessary if birds are subjected to laboratory testing. The Commission asked Member States to further reflect and provide comments on this issue.

Furthermore, there was a discussion on the derogation for the movement of less than 20 poultry other than ratites. Several Member States consider that it would be useful to keep the derogation,

but the Commission would need to specify that, since those animals originate from a registered establishment, they cannot be introduced into an approved establishment.

In relation to the animal health requirements for the movement of captive birds, the Commission clarified that those will be included in a separate section on movements of all animals between confined establishments. Concerning the animal health requirements for the movement of captive birds from establishments other than confined establishments, one Member State suggested adding a requirement for efficacy testing, in case psittacidae had been treated for avian chlamydiosis. Furthermore, Member States asked the Commission to develop rules for the participation of captive birds in shows and exhibitions and to clarify the provisions for racing pigeons.

Following the request from Member States, the Commission will also verify that the wording of the provisions on the residency period of poultry in the establishment of origin is in line with current provisions. Finally, Member States suggested increasing the deadlines for the clinical examination prior to the movement of certain categories of poultry to another Member State.

3.3. Presentation and discussion on the animal health requirements for the entry into the Union of poultry, hatching eggs and captive birds

The Commission presented the amended text on the requirements for the entry into the Union of poultry and hatching eggs and clarified that certain provisions would need to be further amended based on the conclusions of the discussion on similar provisions for movements within the Union. The Commission noted that contrary to current requirements, the working document proposed requirements for HPAI at the level of the third country and for LPAI at the level of the establishment of origin of the animals. Member States commented that the proposed approach was different from current rules and that third countries request freedom of avian influenza and impose restrictions even in the case of LPAI. The Commission commented that this was in line with the proposed future approach to LPAI in the Union and with discussions at international level.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The revised text of both documents will be discussed in expert group meetings to be held in September 2018.

The Commission thanked Member States for their input and comments during this meeting and encouraged them to reflect on the issues discussed and provide written feedback by 6 July 2018.

5. Next steps

The outcome of the discussions and opinions provided by participants during this expert group meeting will be used by the Commission during future work towards the preparation of possible future delegated acts under the Animal Health Law.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting has been scheduled for September 2018.