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Health and Food Safety Directorate General

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**Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed**  
**Section *Animal Health and Welfare***  
**19 September 2018**

**CIRCABC Link:** <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/d36ff9ae-0fd1-41e0-8ee0-8fec085e3c37>

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**A.01 General information by Member States.**

No item raised.

**A.02 Lessons learned from an audit in Slovenia on exports of live animals by sea.**

The Commission presented findings from an audit in Slovenia in April 2018 which were relevant to other Member States on animal welfare during transport by sea to non-EU countries. Before any transport took place, Member States of departure had not ensured, when approving journey logs, that there was a transporter responsible for transport by sea. The livestock vessel seen during the audit was completely inadequate but had recently operated out of this port as well as ports in two other Member States and had been approved in a fourth Member State. In the discussion, one Member State suggested that it might be better for animal welfare in such situations to let the animals travel when it was not possible to send them back. The Commission pointed out that the organiser and transporter are responsible to deal with any refusal to load animals and the authorities also need to have a contingency arrangement to deal with such a situation. It should never be assumed that all Article 20 checks are going to be favourable so that the journey can continue. The Commission emphasised the role of Member States to take actions upstream (at departure) to prevent problems arising when animals arrive at EU exit points.

Several Member States expressed their opinion that the Commission has not done enough to facilitate sharing inspection outcomes between authorities. The Commission explained that the national contact points and the experts who prepared the network document on inspections of livestock vessels had agreed to use CIRCABC for this purpose, but accepted that the Commission could consider further how to achieve better sharing of information. Only one Member State is updating this database in relation to approval of livestock vessels. This Member State claimed that they were restricted by the Regulation to give an approval which lasted for five years. The Commission clarified that if they were concerned by issues such as the state of maintenance of a ship they could be stricter than the Regulation and give an approval for a short period. The Member State concerned made suggestions about the use of maritime safety information to better target inspections. Another Member State suggested that approval of RoRo vessels should be considered in any update of the network document on transport by sea.

### **A.03 Information on Newcastle disease in Belgium.**

The Belgian representative gave a final summary report on 20 Newcastle disease outbreaks that had occurred between April and end of July affecting primarily hobby and backyard farms throughout the country, two commercial poultry farms and one dealer premises. Belgium will undertake a review of preventive measures applicable to such type of holdings in particular as regards vaccination against that infection.

### **A.04 Information from the European Reference Laboratory on surveillance for avian influenza carried out in poultry and wild birds in Member States during 2017.**

A representative from the EU Reference Laboratory for avian influenza reported the results of AI surveillance in poultry and wild birds during 2017. Almost 17,000 poultry holdings have been sampled in the EU. 61 holdings (116 in 2016) were found sero-positive for H5 avian influenza subtype, predominately ducks and geese, as in previous years, and farmed game birds. Follow-up investigations led to virus detection in ~40% of the cases. 10 holdings (7 in 2016) tested sero-positive for H7 avian influenza subtype, mostly free-range laying hens and farmed game birds (gallinaceous and waterfowl). One of the nine follow-up investigations made, led to a positive virological result for low pathogenic avian influenza. During 2017 19,543 wild birds have been tested under the programme as compared to 12,828 in 2016. Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of subtype H5 was confirmed in 1,887 wild birds reflecting the impact of the 2016/2017 HPAI epidemic.

### **A.05 Outcomes of the third meeting of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare.**

The Commission presented an update of the activities of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare with a focus on the outcomes of the last meeting of 21 June 2018.

During this third meeting, the outcome of the work of the subgroup on transport has been presented and a second subgroup on pig welfare was established. The topical discussion was devoted to the welfare of farmed fish. Furthermore, the Commission presented its report on the impact of animal welfare international activities on the competitiveness of European livestock producers in a globalised world to Members; an EU coordinated control plan on online sales of dogs and cats and an IT communication tool developed for Members. In addition, two voluntary initiatives have emerged: on the welfare of fish and on the welfare of pullets; adding to the two existing ones -on the responsible ownership and care of equidae and on the health and welfare of pets in trade. The fourth Platform meeting is schedule for 19 November 2018.

The presentation was followed by a question from a Member State wanting to know if an evaluation of the animal welfare strategy announced by the Commissioner during the Platform meeting - and also suggested by the Court of Auditors - would actually be realised. The Commission replied that indeed such evaluation was planned.

### **A.06 Information from Slovenia concerning a declaration of freedom from viral haemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) for an independent compartment comprising the the stream "Šujica" and the fish farm "Koligar".**

The declaration demonstrates that conducted surveillance programme and other relevant information apparently is compliance with current legislation. The declaration is placed on the website of the Slovenian Competent Authority under [http://www.uvhvvr.gov.si/si/delovna\\_podrocja/zdravje\\_zivali/akvakultura/proglasitve/](http://www.uvhvvr.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/zdravje_zivali/akvakultura/proglasitve/).

**A.07 Information from Denmark regarding a declaration concerning withdrawal of disease free status regarding *Marteilia Refringens*.**

The Danish representative provided information regarding the withdrawal of the disease free status regarding *Marteilia Refringens* in Denmark.

**A.08 Information from Slovenia concerning declaration of freedom from viral haemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) and infectious haematopoietic necrosis (IHN) for the zone "Sava Bohinjka".**

The declaration demonstrates that conducted surveillance programme and other relevant information apparently is compliance with current legislation. The declaration is placed on the website of the Slovenian Competent Authority under: [http://www.uhvvr.gov.si/si/delovna\\_podrocja/zdravje\\_zivali/akvakultura/proglasitve/](http://www.uhvvr.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/zdravje_zivali/akvakultura/proglasitve/).

**A.09 Presentation of the Danish action plan against African swine fever.**

Denmark gave a comprehensive report on their action plan against African swine fever which included the installation of a 67km fence along the Danish/German border and an ASF simulation exercise in 2019.

**A.10 Update from Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania on the epidemiological situation, control and surveillance measures applied as regards African swine fever.**

Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Belgium made detailed presentations on the situation of ASF in their territories. The situation was reviewed and risks from the latest developments were discussed. The useful measures applied in Czechia were evocated as an example to follow (in line with the EFSA report of July 2018) along with a reinforcement of the surveillance measures. The Commission reminded Hungary that the 90 days to provide the written plan, of the measures taken to eradicate the disease in the infected area, already elapsed. Additionally, the Commission informed the Committee of the need to identify a contact point for African swine fever in each Member State to streamline communication.

**A.11 Information concerning two declarations from Norway on disease free status for Infectious Salmon Anaemia (ISA) of an independent compartment Rimstad in Tingvoll Municipality and of a dependent compartment Nystølvågen in Fusa municipality.**

The Commission informed the delegates that the point has been reduced to the declaration of Rimstad as the other declaration on Nystølvågen has been withdrawn by Norway. The Commission also briefly reminded the delegates what was discussed at the 12 July meeting on the wider context of the Rimstad declaration, the suggested way ahead and thanked and outlined the feed-back it received on it from the Member States over summer. For the substance of the declaration the Norwegian delegate explained its main elements, also including the handling of the past outbreak of infectious salmon anaemia (ISA), its follow-up and the surveillance conducted since the restocking after the cleaning, disinfection and fallowing period. The Member States which spoke supported the proposed way ahead and a few sought clarification on technical elements (epidemiology, physical barriers etc.).

The Commission appreciated the presentation and the subsequent discussion, expressed hope that all the necessary data is now available for the Member States,

explained that the presentation will be made available on the web site of the Committee and that more details are also available from the actual declaration on the web site of Norwegian competent authority (link below) and suggested further bilateral clarifications as necessary. The Commission reminded the delegates about the procedural aspects i.e. the declaration will automatically take effect in 60 days from the date of meeting unless significant objective concerns are raised in writing by the Member States. Link to the submitted declaration is to be placed immediately to the following SANTE web page: [http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live\\_animals/aquaculture/declarations\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/live_animals/aquaculture/declarations_en.htm)

**A.12 Report on the EU Veterinary Emergency Team (EUVET) mission on Peste des Petits Ruminants in Bulgaria.**

The Lead Inspector from EUVET gave a detailed presentation on the recent visit to Bulgaria with regard to Peste des Petits Ruminants.

**A.13 Update information by Austria on an outbreak of *Brucella melitensis* in cattle.**

During epidemiological investigation a holding close to the primary outbreak was found positive. One cow was found seropositive, with epidemiological connection with the primary outbreak. No indications so far regarding the source of the infection. Epidemiological investigations are still ongoing, restrictions on both farms.

**A.14 Update from the Commission on highly pathogenic avian influenza in the EU.**

The Commission representative gave an update on highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in poultry and wild bird cases in Member States in 2018 as compared to the previous season. The worldwide situation for HPAI was briefly presented including HPAI epidemic in Russia that has occurred during the summer period.

**A.15 Information from Germany on highly pathogenic avian influenza in Germany.**

Germany presented information on an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5N6 in captive birds that was confirmed on 1 September in Wismar, Land Mecklenburg Pomerania. Based on a risk assessment performed by the competent authorities in the Land, they have made use of the derogation from zoning around that outbreak. All birds were culled and safely disposed of.

**B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Union.  
Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain protective measures relating to African swine fever in Belgium.**

The measures proposed were a confirmation of the interim measures taken by the Commission in response to the emergency.

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**B.02 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Union contribution to the European Union reference laboratories and the European Union reference centres for 2019 and 2020.**

Withdrawn from this agenda.

**Vote Postponed**

**B.03 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending Annexes I and II to Decision 2003/467/EC as regards the declaration of certain regions of Italy as officially tuberculosis-free and officially brucellosis-free in relation to bovine herds.**

The point was neither discussed nor voted upon. One Member State officially complained for this delay.

**Vote Postponed**

**B.04 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision concerning certain protective measures relating to African swine fever in Bulgaria.**

The measures proposed were a confirmation of the interim measures taken by the Commission in response to the emergency.

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**B.05 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision amending the Annex to Implementing Decision 2014/709/EU concerning animal health control measures relating to African swine fever in certain Member States.**

The Draft was presented for vote to amend the annex to Decision 2014/709 with regards to restriction areas in Poland (new Part II) and Lithuania (new Part III).

**Vote taken:** Favourable opinion.

**C.01 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation on the application of certain disease prevention and control rules to categories of listed diseases and establishing a list of species and groups of species posing a considerable risk for the spread of those listed diseases.**

The discussion on this draft is concluded and Member States were invited to send their comments in writing if they spotted any mistakes and in this respect any final corrections are needed in the draft. The vote on the draft will take place after completed consultation procedures.

**M.01 Spain - CIHEAM (International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies).**

Spain provided information on a training organised by CIHEAM (International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies) in the month of November.

**M.02 West Nile Fever in Germany.**

Germany informed about the detection of West Nile Fever virus in two Great grey owls and a hawk in Bavaria and Saxony-Anhalt since end of August. Surveillance has been enhanced including the use of mosquito traps and testing samples taken during avian influenza monitoring.

### **M.03 Highly pathogenic avian influenza in Bulgaria**

The Bulgarian representative informed the Committee about the confirmation on that same day of a new outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of subtype H5 in a commercial laying hen farm located in the region of Plovdiv. Disease control measures according to the Avian Influenza Directive are being applied. The last outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza had occurred at the beginning of July.