

**Minutes of the meeting of the Expert Group to discuss draft Delegated Regulations amending Commission Delegated Regulations (EU) 2019/2035, 2020/686, 2020/687, 2020/688, 2020/689, 2020/692
Brussels, 26 November 2020**

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, organized as virtual on line meeting because of the COVID-19 situation. The Member States' and EEA countries representatives from the competent veterinary authorities were participating in the meeting. The Chair noted the absence of representatives from the European Parliament and the Council.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Introduction

The chair presented the agenda, the points for discussion and the overall timetable of the meeting. The points under discussion were the draft amendments of Delegated Regulations (EU) 2019/2035, 2020/686, 2020/687, 2020/688, 2020/689 and 2020/692.

3.2. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2035

The Commission presented the changes introduced to the draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 2019/2035 compared to the text presented in the previous meeting of the expert group, in relation to identification of ovine and caprine animals and psittacidae.

In reply to a question from a Member State, the Commission confirmed that the derogation provided for in Article 46(5) is covered by the draft rules laid down in Article 45(4)(a) and in Article 48(5).

A Member State requested that the text on the identification of psittacidae has a clear reference that the means of identification enables the traceability of the animals.

Another Member State requested to allow for the possibility that pigs are identified with the supplier number. The Commission will look into the matter and further reflect on that request.

3.3. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/686

The Commission noted that no comments were received on the draft following the meeting of October; however, certain new changes were introduced into the text in relation to some of its provisions.

A Member State requested for a voluntary addition of antibiotics to the diluent of semen of porcine and bovine animals. The Commission noted that no changes are foreseen at this stage, until scientific studies prove that such addition is not necessary or OIE standards are amended accordingly.

Furthermore, another Member State requested to maintain the requirement in relation to the validity of the certificates for germinal products. The Commission clarified that current legislation does not lay down a validity period for those certificates and asked all Member States to submit their position on this issue.

3.4. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687

The Commission presented the changes introduced in the draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 2020/687 comparing to the document distributed in the previous expert group meeting. The Commission indicated that it will further reflect on the request from a Member State to clarify the provisions in relation to the movements of animal by-products obtained in slaughterhouses located in restricted zones for Category A diseases and the certification of such movements.

3.5. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688

The Commission informed participants that based on the comments received, several changes were introduced in the draft in relation to assembly operations of kept ungulates, movements of dogs, cats and ferrets from assembly centres, racing pigeons, animal health certification and notification requirements in relation to derogations under Article 139 of the AHL and movements of wild animals. Several issues in relation to the requirements for the movement of captive birds, exhibitions of birds and movements of racing pigeons were also discussed and clarified. In relation to racing pigeons, Member States indicated that usually those birds are moved to races in another Member State in common vehicles and enquired on the possibility that animal health certificates are issued at the point of their collection, rather than at the establishment of origin. The Commission committed to further reflect on that request.

3.6. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689

The Commission presented the draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 2020/689 indicating the changes introduced in the text following the comments received.

In relation to the status free against BVD, a Member State requested an additional amendment in order to allow the introduction into free establishments of animals vaccinated in the Member State before the ban of the vaccination. The Commission replied that the request has been received the day before and not assessed yet. Despite that, the Commission noted that it would be difficult to change the rules at this stage.

In reply to a question in relation to the surveillance programmes which will replace the health status which is referred to as 'Category III' in the current legislation, and whether these

programmes will be compulsory for VHS and IHN, the Commission clarified that these programmes are voluntary, and there is no requirement to test for those diseases in establishments which are not included in a surveillance programme.

3.7. Presentation and discussion on the draft Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/692

The Commission presented further changes to the draft amendment of Regulation (EU) 2020/692 in relation to composite products, hatching eggs of poultry, aquatic animals and germinal products of ungulates.

The Commission indicated that it has received a request for clarification why there are no animal health requirements for the entry into the Union of semen of dogs and of camelid and cervid animals while such requirements exist for movements between Member States. The Commission has asked Member States for their opinion in relation to the need for harmonisation of those rules.

A Member State commented on the draft amendment of the requirements for racing pigeons and suggested to exclude those birds from the movement requirements of captive birds after entry into the Union.

Some Member States commented on the proposed text of Article 163 regarding a derogation from the animal health certificate for shelf stable composite products and requested further amendments to that Article to include certain ingredients that are not covered in the current draft. The Commission explained the last proposal and the reasoning behind it.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The Commission thanked Member States for their input and comments during the meeting and encouraged them to reflect on the issues discussed and provide written feedback no later than 10 December 2020.

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 the amendment to the Delegated Regulations adopted under the Animal Health Law.

No further meeting are envisaged on these drafts. Depending on the written comments received, particular provisions of certain drafts might be distributed for written consultation.