

## Network on NCP for EC Regulation 1099/2009 Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting

**Held on 14-15 October 2019, Parma  
(Agreed on 05 November 2019)**

### Participants

- **Network Representatives of Member States (including EFTA Countries):**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Name<sup>1</sup></b>
Austria	Katrina Eder
Belgium	Bruno Cardinal
Bulgaria	---
Cyprus	Natia Kalli
Croatia	---
Czech Republic	Richard Wallo
Denmark	Else Enemark
Estonia	David Arney
Finland	Satu Raussi
France	Francois Massaer
Germany	Michael Marahrens
Greece	Katerina Ntontorou
Hungary	---
Ireland	Michael Moran
Italy	Domitilla Pierrucci
Latvia	Iveta Kocina
Lithuania	Giedrius Blekaitis
Luxembourg	---
Malta	---
Netherlands	Marien Gerritzen
Poland	Krystyna Pedrakowska
Portugal	---
Romania	---
Slovakia	Zuzana Hurnikova
Slovenia	Tea Dronjic
Spain	Antonio Velarde

Sweden	Charlotte Berg
United Kingdom	---
Iceland	Kristin Gudlaugsdottir
Liechtenstein	---
Norway	Cecilie Marie Mejdell
Switzerland	Jacob Peter

- **Hearing Experts**

Christoph Winckler

Virginie Michel

Domitilla Pierucci (IT)

- **European Commission:**

Ignacio Carro Perez (DG SANTE, Unit F2)

Stanislav Ralchev (DG SANTE, Unit G2) – video link presentation

- **EFSA:**

Denise Candiani (chair): ALPHA Unit

Yves van der Stede: ALPHA Unit

Marie Louise Schneider: ALPHA Unit

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chair welcomed the participants.

Apologies were received from Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal and Liechtenstein.

The Latvian Member State representative participated on the second day only.

### **2. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted without changes.

### **3. Agreement of the minutes of the 2nd meeting of the Network on NCP for EC Regulation 1099/2009 held on 18 October 2017, Parma.**

The minutes were agreed by written procedure on 03 November 2017 and published on the EFSA website.

### **4. Topics for discussion**

#### **4.1. DG SANTE activities on protection of animals at killing**

The European Commission (Stanislav Ralchev, DG SANTE, Unit G2 'Animal health and welfare') provided an overview of the work and actions to improve animal welfare at slaughter and killing. At first, the Commission activities related to the

coordination of EU position on OIE standards related to the draft revision of Chapter 7.5. Slaughter of animals (partially) and Chapter 7.Z on animal welfare and laying hens production system. In this context, EFSA was mandated by the Commission to produce a series of scientific opinions on slaughter of animals and on-farm killing of animals. The first opinion on domestic birds has been adopted recently (see section 4.3).

Dr Ralchev also presented the project "EU Handbook on Stamping out" which is a guide to humane killing of farm animals in the context of Animal Health Law. The publication is foreseen by the end of 2019.

He also presented progress of the evaluation of the EU Strategy on animal welfare, which is a two years process involving a one year external study (starts in October 2019) and the production of a Commission Staff Working Document.

The Network was also briefed about the activities of the EU Platform on animal welfare which held its last meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> October 19. [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare/eu-platform-animal-welfare/meetings\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare/eu-platform-animal-welfare/meetings_en)

Dr Ralchev also presented the establishment of the EU Reference Centre for poultry and other small farmed animals. This has been Designated on 4 October 2019 to a consortium of 4 bodies: ANSES (France), IRTA (Spain), Aarhus (Denmark) and IZSLER (Italy). The foreseen start is January 2020 (tbc).

#### **4.2. Overview SANTE F past and planned audits on welfare at slaughter**

Ignacio Carro Perez (SANTE F) presented an overview of past and planned audits on welfare at slaughter. Thirteen audits were carried over, a pilot audit in 2013 and the rest in 2014/15. Audits were organised in MSs where 80% of EU poultry and cattle is produced. Focus of the audits was to check the effectiveness of official controls on business operators to ensure animals are spared any avoidable pain, distress, or suffering. This was accomplished by auditing business operator compliance, presence of certificates of competence, suitability of official controls and presence of guides to good practice. The main issues encountered related to the planning of the arrival of animals (scheduling; feed and bedding, dealing with animals unfit for transport), the lack of manufacturers' instructions for operating equipment and the monitoring of stunning vs requirements of Article 16.

In addition, the SANTE programme of health and food audits and analysis for 2020 was presented. It is a project on animal welfare at slaughter to assess the MS's follow-up of corrective actions to non-compliances from previous audits.

#### **4.3. Presentation of the European Animal Welfare Reference Centre**

Michael Marahrens presented an update on the European Animal Welfare Reference Centre that was set via EU Reg 625/2017 on official controls. The main scopes of the centre are five: i) to provide scientific and technical expertise, ii) develop animal welfare indicators, iii) develop methods of assessment and improvement, iv) support scientific and technical studies, v) promote training in

Member States and non-EU Countries and v) ultimately disseminate research findings and technical innovations.

This centre is dedicated to the welfare of pigs, being this a priority for the enforcement of EU Directive 120/2008. The centre was assigned to a network composed by Wageningen University (NL), Aarhus University (DK) and FLI (DE).

Dissemination of results is achieved through a website: <https://www.eurcaw.eu/en/eurcaw-pigs.htm>

Training is organised at level of National MS i.e. support to national initiatives. One was organised for Central/Western region, others in Eastern, Mediterranean and finally Scandinavian countries.

Dossiers are being developed, the first one on tail biting, the second on climate control and the third on welfare of pigs during transport and a fourth on farrowing sows.

#### **4.4. EFSA's ongoing mandates on animal welfare**

Virginie Michel presented the ongoing work of EFSA in the field of animal welfare. Precisely, the scientific opinions on domestic birds slaughter and on-farm killing recently adopted by the AHAW Panel of EFSA. The opinions respond to the mandates on slaughter and killing received from the European Commission in which the Commission requested EFSA to review the scientific publications provided in its previous opinions of 2004 and 2006 to provide a sound scientific basis for the future discussions at international level on the welfare of animals in the context of:

- slaughter i.e. killing animals for human consumption (mandate 1)
- other types of killing i.e. killing for other purposes than slaughter (mandate 2).

In the context of domestic birds slaughter, the scientific opinion cover the following processes and issues: arrival of the animals, unloading, lairage, handling and moving of the animals, restraint, stunning, bleeding, emergency killing (reasons and conditions under which animals have to be killed outside the normal slaughter line), unacceptable methods, procedures or practices on welfare grounds.

For each process or issue in each category, EFSA:

- Identified the animal welfare hazards and their possible origins (facilities/equipment, staff),
- Defined qualitative or measureable criteria to assess performance on animal welfare (animal based measures),
- Provided preventive and corrective measures to address the hazards identified (through structural or managerial measures),
- Pointed out specific hazards related to species or types of animals (young, with horns, etc.)

The results of these assessments are presented in a summarised version in the so called "outcome tables" of the opinions. The scientific opinion on domestic birds was developed as first but similar opinions on other farmed species will be initiated

one after the other and will be delivered at different timings ending in December 2020.

#### **4.5. Exchange of information among MSs**

The following topics were discussed for exchange of information:

Topic 1 (Finland): audits in pig slaughter houses were performed in Finland and Denmark by veterinarians to assess animal welfare. Based on existing animal welfare schemes /welfare quality, ABMs were used to assess the welfare status of the pigs and grades from 0-5 were given. The main problems were found in the design of the slaughter (sharp angles, slippery floor), the noise levels and the provision of feed and water. Milking cows in lactation was found as a major problem due to missing equipment. The auditors came to the conclusion that a slaughter speed of more than 30 cattle per hour is impairing welfare. Based on this outcome it was recommended that national checks are necessary to ensure animal welfare at slaughter.

Topic 2 (Switzerland): swiss authorities performed a survey amongst slaughterhouses on operating procedures, self-audits and stunning equipment and their maintenance. The outcome of the survey showed that in most slaughterhouses replacement devices for stunning were available and that they complied with the regulation about maintenance of stunning equipment which must be performed at the interval of 2 years. Problems were found in stunning devices for larger cattle and heavy bulls. The parameters were not sufficiently adjusted. It was found that there is insufficient support by the manufacturer of stunning equipment. It was concluded that awareness should be raised amongst slaughter personnel and official veterinarians towards animal welfare during the slaughter process.

Slovenia asked how they revise the stunning equipment if there are no manufacturers in the country as they have a similar problem. It was discussed that for electrical stunning there are people from Germany coming to revise the equipment but the communication is often difficult. In some cases local electricians revise the stunning parameters and the machine which should not be the case. Generally Switzerland is not satisfied with the service provided by stunning device manufacturers. Slovenia asked if the survey can be shared. Many MS agree that there should exist approval systems for stunning devices – related to animal welfare standards and not only security standards - in all Member States.

Topic 3 (France): the French authorities produced videos for slaughter personnel to introduce indicators of consciousness after stunning. This was done for the main species (cattle, pigs and goats) for the common stunning methods (captive bolt, electrical stunning and gas stunning) as well as for slaughter without stunning. The videos are showing the slaughter process from restraining to death, starting with an introduction on the stunning device. The signs of consciousness focus on the observation of three indicating parts of the animal: the eyes, the nostrils and the posture. For each of these parts one video is showing the indicators of consciousness.

The aim of this project is to increase awareness of slaughter personnel for animal welfare and standardise vocabulary and training methods.

Topic 4 (Sweden): the issuing of certificates of competence for slaughter personnel in Sweden is very complex and involves many entities. In case the owner of the certificate violates the legislation repeatedly and severely the certificate should be withdrawn. However, this can only happen if the certificate was issued by the country that also withdraws it. If the slaughterhouse is operated by a company from another Member State the procedure is not standardised nor organised in the Regulation 1099/2009. The question to the NCP was if they have any experience regarding this issue. The Slovenian representative explained that if the certificate is withdrawn it can not be regained within 2 years. However, if the certificate is acquired in another country it can not be proven as there is no register. MSs agreed an international certificate (in English) would be fitting the purpose.

Topic 5 (Slovenia): in case the competent authority has to euthanise a small amount of animals due to welfare reasons (hunger), should this be stated in the annual depopulation report? MSs expressed their view that it should be reported.

#### **4.6. Sharing of documents and information among NCP with Microsoft 365**

EFSA set up a common shared space on the Microsoft 365 platform for sharing information between NCP such as guides to good practice, opinions, training material, and other existing resources. It can be found at this link:

<https://efsa815.sharepoint.com/sites/TeamNCPNetworkReg1099-2009?e=1:e1d04e829386477fa9da39761feb0394>

Under "Documents" the relevant folders can be found. In preparation of the meeting of next year, it was agreed to share and upload any material on the corresponding folders. Efforts will be made to guarantee access to all MS representatives.

#### **4.7. Exercise on "Hazard identification and ranking for cattle at slaughter"**

The second part of the meeting was dedicated to the exercise on "Hazard identification and ranking for cattle at slaughter". The outcomes from the exercise are included in the Annex of these minutes.

#### **4.8. Topics for the next meeting**

A short discussion was held to propose topics for next year meeting. Suggestions were made related to: i) welfare friendly methods of depopulation of any kind of livestock - method on the field; ii) communication on contingency plans in case of depopulation/outbreaks - SOPs for on-farm killing. How to implement the legislation?; iii) data collection for welfare (harmonizing data from slaughterhouses)

### **5. Date for next meeting**

Next meeting will be held in fall 2020 (date to be fixed).

## **Annex**

### **Hazard identification and ranking for cattle at slaughter**

#### **Introduction**

Protecting animal welfare at slaughter is about minimising the pain, distress or suffering of farmed animals at the time of killing.

Article 20 of Council Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing requires Member States to ensure sufficient independent scientific support to assist the competent authorities in a series of scientific and technical tasks, e.g. for the development of new stunning methods or guides to good practice, for the sharing of best practices and scientific information regarding the implementation of the Regulation. Each Member State identified a single contact point, responsible for sharing technical and scientific information and best practices regarding the implementation of this Regulation with its counterparts and the Commission.

The AHAW Network on “NCP for EC Regulation 1099/2009” includes EU Member State organisations representatives that are designated as National Contact Points (NCP) for Regulation EC 1099/2009. The NCP Network meets once a year in order to facilitate exchange of information and sharing of best practices among NCPs.

At the NCP Network meeting held in October 2018, an exercise was held aimed at the identification and ranking of hazards for poultry at slaughter.

The process from unloading to killing of the animals at the abattoir can be divided into several phases such as i) arrival, ii) unloading, iii) lairage, iv) handling and moving of the animals, v) restraint, vi) stunning and vii) bleeding. During each phase, the animals are exposed to hazards and run a risk of reduced welfare.

NCP experts listed and ranked the hazards present during the various phases of the slaughter process. The resulting ranking of hazards is included in specific tables of this report.

#### **Assessment**

##### **Hazard identification**

Hazards were previously identified by experts from the standing working group on slaughter and further panel members of the animal health and welfare panel. A list of hazards was produced for each phase of slaughter of cattle and presented to the NCP members. NCP members were asked to add additional hazards present in the slaughter line according to their knowledge and/or practical experience, divided by the phases of the process listed above.

## Ranking of hazards for cattle slaughter

During the meeting, per each phase of the slaughter process, a list of all indicated hazards was produced and presented to the NCPs. Discussion was held in order to agree on a terminology for the common understanding of the hazards. Finally, per each phase of the process, NCPs were asked to vote, through an online based application, for the hazards that were present in their countries.

## Conclusions

The tables in the following paragraphs report the outcomes of the ranking of hazards for poultry at slaughter, divided by phase of the process. The resulting ranking gives indication of the hazards that are most common in European Member States and most urgent to be addressed in order to safeguard animal welfare during the slaughter process.

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "arrival"

**Table 1:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "arrival"

Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "arrival"	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Prolonged waiting time to unloading	17
Poor supervision	14
Slippery floor	10
Extreme weather conditions	6
Insufficient space allowance	6
Mixing of unfamiliar animals	5
Water deprivation too long	5
Lack of ventilation	4
Food deprivation too long	3
Lack of bedding material	3

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "unloading"

**Table 2:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "unloading"

Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "unloading"	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Inappropriate handling	18
Improper design	14
Unloading speed	9
Slippery ramps for unloading	8
Fitness for transport not checked	8
Poor supervision	7
Poor design for inspections	3
Use of electric prods	2

Gap between ramp and truck	2
To low effective temperature	1
Improper light	1
Noise	1
Steep ramps	1

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "lairage"

**Table 3:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "lairage"

Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "lairage"	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Mixing animals (size, age, sex)	14
Water deprivation	9
Stocking density	7
Lack of straw bedding	7
Inappropriate design	6
Injuries not checked	6
Poor state of lairage equipment	5
Food deprivation too long	4
Low air quality	4
Noise	3
Horns	2
Not milking cows	2
Splitting groups	1
Absence of emergency killing equipment	1
Inappropriate housing of injured animals	1
Inappropriate care of animals in late gestation	1

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "handling and moving of animals"

**Table 4:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "handling and moving of animals"

Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "handling and moving of animals"	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Inappropriate handling	23
Improper design of drive way (flooring)	16
Use of electric goads	13
Mixing of unfamiliar animals	6
Injuries not checked	6
Poor daily management	5
Improper design (sharp angles, tight curves)	4
Staff not changing clothes when going to lairage area	1

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "restraint"

**Table 5:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "restraint"

<b>Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "restraint"</b>	<b>Number of Member States where this hazard is present</b>
Inappropriate restraint	16
Inappropriate handling	16
Inappropriate design of restraint (too large, too small)	15
Restraining time too long	12
Improper restraint of the head	9
Isolation from other animals	5
Improper maintenance	3

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- mechanical

**Table 6:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- mechanical

<b>Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- mechanical</b>	<b>Number of Member States where this hazard is present</b>
Inappropriate shooting position	23
Maintenance of equipment	15
Inappropriate equipment	14
Head inaccessible (for 2 <sup>nd</sup> shot)	13
Inappropriate storage condition for cartridge	6

1

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- electrical

**Table 7:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- electrical

<b>Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stunning"- electrical</b>	<b>Number of Member States where this hazard is present</b>
Wrong positioning of stunner/electrodes	11
Inappropriate parameters	10
Poor electrical contact	9
Inappropriate maintenance of equipment	8
Improper system	4
Improper sequence of application of current	3

### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stun to stick area"

**Table 8:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stun to stick area"

<b>Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "stun to stick area"</b>	<b>Number of Member States where this hazard is present</b>
Lack of monitoring (e.g. animal conscious)	18
Delay of stun to stick	5

Electroimmobilisation	1
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### Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase “bleeding”

**Table 9:** Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase “bleeding”

Hazards for cattle slaughter: phase "bleeding"	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Poor sticking	21
Dressing when alive	18
Falling off the rail	12
Electro stimulation	5

### Hazards for cattle slaughter without stunning

**Table 10:** Hazards for cattle slaughter without stunning

Hazards for cattle slaughter without stunning	Number of Member States where this hazard is present
Inappropriate restraint	14
Repeated cuts	11
Poor cutting	9
Delay between restraint and sticking	7
False aneurism	4
Dressing when alive	2
Rotation	2