



**ADOPTED MINUTES OF 3RD PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL
ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND ANIMAL WELFARE
(09/12/2003)**

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PARTICIPANTS

Harry J. Blokhuis, Donald M. Broom, Stefano Cinotti, Michael Gunn, Joerg Hartung, Per Have, Xavier Manteca Vilanova, David B. Morton, Dirk U. Pfeiffer, Michel Pépin, Ronald J. Roberts, José M. Sánchez-Vizcaino, Georgios Theodoropoulos, Philippe Vannier, Marina Verga, Martin Wierup, Ilaria Capua and Michael Gunn.

EFSA: Brigitte Arbelot, Jordi Ferres and Jordi Serratosa, (Scientific co-ordination AHAW panel).

European Commission: Sabine Osaer (SANCO D5), morning session: Andrea Gavinelli (DG SANCO E2), and in the afternoon session: Cornelius Rhein (DG SANCO E2), Isabel Minguez Tudela and John Claxton (DG RTD).

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST/ CONFIDENTIALITY/ INDEPENDENCE

The Chairman welcomed the participants and no member declared a conflict of interest in any of the items on the agenda of this specific meeting.

Apologies were announced for Alejandro Schudel and James M. Sharp.

1.1. Robert Dantzer resignation

Robert Dantzer sent a letter to the EFSA executive director, expressing his resignation due to the change of objectives of the INRA operation where he is director in Bordeaux.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted. It was agreed after a proposal from Michael Gunn to deal with issues regarding other mandates after the break for lunch.

3. PRESENTATION ON RISK ASSESSMENT BY PROF. DIRK PFEIFFER

Prof Dirk Pfeiffer made a brief presentation on “An introduction to Risk assessment”. The presentation pointed out the fact that experts must provide evidence about data sourcing in a systematic review of all the studies that exist. The scientists should also give advice to the risk manager who is then responsible for the actions to be taken.

3.1. Document on the RA-RM Interface meeting.

The document already discussed at the Scientific Committee was presented by the chairman as a reference to be taken into account.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETING

The minutes of the 2nd Plenary Meeting were approved following the written procedure as agreed at the last Plenary Meeting. The minutes were unanimously accepted on the 24th of October 2003 and published at the following web site:
http://www.efsa.eu.int/pdf/minutes_ahaw_02_adopted_en.pdf.

4.1. Definitive Agenda for the Plenary Meetings in 2004

The chairman proposed to extend to one and half to two days all plenary meeting for 2004. The following dates were accepted for 2004:

- 29-30 January (Thursday and Friday),
- 30-31st March (Tuesday and Wednesday),
- 15-16th June (Tuesday and Wednesday),
- 12 (from 2 p.m.)-13th July (Monday and Tuesday),
- 13 (from 2 p.m.)-14th or 14-15th September (To be decided on July).
- 10-11th November (Wednesday and Thursday),
- 13 (from 2 p.m.)-14th December (Monday-Tuesday).

F. X. Manteca on behalf of the Dean of the Veterinary School in Barcelona (Spain) invited the Panel to hold the next plenary meeting in January in their facilities. The proposal was unanimously accepted.

4.2. Media handling document

Members of a panel or who are ad hoc experts should read carefully the media handling document as adopted by the Scientific Committee. They cannot speak on behalf of a panel without first clearing it with EFSA, but this need not hinder their independent status.

5. DISCUSSION ON THE PENDING MANDATES

5.1. Proposal for possible adoption on the Transport opinion based on the scientific report.

The Chairman of the working group explained the state of the situation concerning the scientific report and the scientific opinion. After a long and detailed discussion it was agreed to redraft some of the conclusions and recommendations more appropriately for a risk assessment. This was to be done before the next plenary and the following procedure was agreed. The scientific coordinator will receive from the chairman of the working group a draft to be circulated to all members of the panel. By at the 19th December the latest, the members will submit their comments to EFSA on those redrafted conclusions and recommendations. A final document will then be circulated to all members containing all amendments proposed. A small working group will meet in Brussels the 20th January to finalize the conclusions and recommendations before the next plenary. The final draft after the meeting will be sent to all the AHAW panel members before the next plenary.

5.2. Stunning Report

The Chairman of the working group presented the state of play of the Stunning report. The conclusions and recommendations still need to be discussed and therefore it was decided to organize a small group of AHAW members to meet on the 14th of January in order to finalise the draft opinion.

5.3. Piglet castration.

The Chairman of the working group explained the current activities of the Working group on Piglet castration. EFSA has sent a letter to the Commission in order to ask for clarifications of the mandate. In the meantime a first meeting took place in Dublin the 12th November and a second meeting is foreseen on 15th December in Brussels.

5.4. Microclimate-Transport

The Chairman of the working group explained the current activities of the Working group on Microclimate and Transport. Two meetings have been held in Brussels (23rd October and 10th November). The Scientific Report should be ready for the next plenary.

5.5. Laying hens

The Scientific Co-ordinator explained that a letter had been sent to the Commission to modify the mandate to include food safety aspects and to postpone the deadline. According to EFSA's internal procedures and the Commission's reply, the panel would include aspects of food safety. Meanwhile, a working group will start as soon as possible to work on the welfare aspects.

6. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED ON AHAW BY THE PANEL (AHAW 03-027): SELF MANDATES

EFSA may propose self mandates, but first need the approval of the Executive Director. An appropriate background should be provided for each one of the self task requested, justifying the need. In that scope, several self mandates were proposed at the last meeting. The background to these should be drafted by AHAW members by the 16th of January. The tasks were distributed amongst the members of the panel:

Task 1. Scientific review of new tools for eradication on the OIE list A and some B diseases. By request of a member of the panel Newcastle disease was also included. It was confirmed that a meeting between EFSA and the OIE on this topic would be held on the 16th of December.

Task 2 . Density, Movements of animals (transport live or dead animals) and structure of the production, (Bio-security measures), the scientific tools to qualify health status of a region or a herd (problems of imports) and on farm diagnostic (e.g. trichinellosis).

Task 3. Multi-factorial diseases, impact of the different rearing systems (including organic farming), on their development and maintenance, focusing in respiratory disorders (fattening pigs and broilers).

Task 4. The welfare of farmed fish in relation to management methods (Atlantic salmon and Sea bass).

Task 5. Impact on AH and AW of the management systems of dairy cattle. This review should have two parts, one on general views (state of the art) and second one focused on mastitis and foot and leg disorders.

Other priorities were secondarily identified:

Task 6. Four different tasks were additionally identified: The welfare of turkeys, ducks and horses in relation to management methods, and “green care farms”. The problem is related to the lack of data, therefore research is still necessary. For the “green care farms” the risks are related with zoonoses, animal welfare and human safety to a member of the Panel. This background document was postponed until March 2004 because this expert is highly involved in two on going mandates.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1. Call for expressions of interest for AHAW Panel members

The Management Board decided to complete all Panels including AHAW Panel with 21 members when needed. In the previous plenary, the AHAW Panel proposed that the missing expertise was on Bacteriology and Epidemiology. Therefore EFSA has launched a call of interest for a new member for the AHAW Panel in December (to be published on the OJCE). In the meantime, R. Dantzer, who is an animal welfare specialist, resigned on the 24th of October.

Some members of the panel suggested there was a need to replace Robert Dantzer with another welfare specialist to help deal with the mandate requests. Therefore it was recommended that EFSA try to recruit scientists with horizontal and broad competence in the required areas of expertise stated above.

7.2. State of play on Tuberculosis opinion

The Chairman explained that the opinion has been adopted at the last Plenary Meeting of BIOHAZ (available on Internet). A standard procedure should be established by the Scientific Committee in the future, in order to integrate experts and comments from different panels before the report is finally adopted.

7.3. Vaccination against Salmonella in poultry

A member of the AHAW panel agreed to participate to the work of the BIOHAZ panel to represent the AHAW.

Brussels, 10 December 2003
