



European Food Safety Authority

ADOPTED MINUTES OF THE IXTH PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

(10-11/11/2004)

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PARTICIPANTS

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EFSA: J. Ferrés and J. Serratosa (Scientific co-ordination AHAW panel), S. Mateljan (EFSA Administrative support).

European Commission: S. Osaer, G. Gallhoff (10th), (DG SANCO), and I. Minguez (11th) (DG RTD).

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Apologies were announced for Stefano Cinotti, Ilaria Capua, Michel Pépin, Xavier Manteca, and Alejandro Schudel and for the 11 November, apologies for Michael Gunn, Harry Blokhuis and Joerg Hartung.

The members of the Panel were informed that a senior scientist Maria Pittman had joined the AHAW team from the beginning of November. Additionally Brigitte Arbelot (National Expert) left EFSA to join the DG RTD services at the Commission, after a year of fruitful work in the AHAW team.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE VIII PLENARY MEETING

The minutes of the 8th Plenary Meeting held in Brussels on 14-15th September, were unanimously adopted by written procedure and published on 11 October 2004 at the following web site: <http://www.efsa.eu.int/>

4. ADOPTED OPINIONS

4.1. Microclimate

The opinion related to Standards for the microclimate inside animal road transport vehicles was adopted unanimously by written procedure and published on Internet on the 20th October 2004.

4.2. **Salmonella** Vaccination

BIOHAZ Panel adopted the opinion on 20th October. The suggestions and changes proposed by the AHAW Panel were taken into account. The document will be published after minor editorial changes.

5. SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS FOR POSSIBLE ADOPTION

5.1. Laying Hens.

The Chairman of the working group, Prof. Harry Blokhuis, explained the current situation of the draft scientific report and opinion. The report was accepted by the Panel at the previous plenary and the discussion was focused on the opinion. After accepting comments and proposals for amendments, the opinion was unanimously adopted. Additionally it was requested that the Chairman should proceed to reclassify the future research priorities (high or other priorities), the new format will be circulated to all members of the panel once available.

In order to adopt and publish the final opinion, the EFSA secretariat will include the final adopted part on egg safety (microbiological and chemical risks) of the BIOHAZ Panel (adopted on 21/10/04) and CONTAM Panel (pending adoption). It is anticipated that the final opinion could be ready for publication in December.

6. LETTERS FROM THE COMMISSION REFERRING TO AHAW PANEL OPINIONS

6.1. Piglet castration

The Commission official introduced the content and the reasons for the letter, recommending some changes in the content of the report. The content of the Conclusions and the recommendations were questioned. The panel agreed that the Chairman of the Working group on piglet castration will prepare a short note proposing some clarifications to the report. This note will be distributed for written procedure or for possible acceptance at the next plenary.

6.2. Transport of animals

It was agreed that the chairman of the Working group responsible for the opinion on transport will submit a reply to the request from the Commission. This draft will be submitted by written procedure for possible acceptance. In case of non agreement the issue will be discussed at the next plenary meeting.

6.3. Other issues

In order to avoid misunderstandings and for a better comprehension of the scope of the requested opinions, it is important for the mutual cooperation between the AHAW Panel and the Commission that at the kick off meeting for each working group, a member of the Commission, directly dealing with the mandate, should preferably be present.

7. OTHER ISSUES

7.1. EFSA's evaluation document. Terms of reference.

The document was distributed to all members of the Panel in order to receive comments for AHAW exchange of views. Members of the panel were requested to send their comments and possible contributions before 3rd of December. EFSA will circulate all the proposals in a single document for discussion at the next plenary.

7.2. Priorities and gaps for the DG RTD on the 7th Framework program and possible emerging risks on AHAW

The panel requested the Panel members to send their proposal to the EFSA for discussion at the next plenary meeting on 14 December.

Dr Isabel Minguez stated that DG RTD is very grateful for any feedback from the panel on the current recommendations for future research expressed in the scientific opinions and any additional recommendations. The Commission official gave a short explanation about the meaning of technological platforms.

8. PENDING MANDATES

8.1. Avian Influenza

Jordi Serratosa explained the state of play of this opinion. Some members of the working group on Avian Influenza met on the 11th November in Padova to shorten and restructure the current draft. The working group is expecting to have possibly a final meeting in December 2004 or January 2005.

8.2. Welfare of Rabbits

The Chairman of the working group explained the activities of the working group. A meeting took place recently 8-9 November and the next meeting had been arranged for 15 December. Marion Wooldridge was requested to arrange for some guidance for that working group to provide inputs on the procedures on risk assessment model. David Morton was requested to make a short introduction of the approach taken to reply to the mandate on welfare of rabbits at the next plenary meeting in December.

8.3. Rift Valley fever

The Chairman of the working group informed that the working group has held two meetings (16th August and 11th October) and next meeting is foreseen on 18-19 November in London.

8.4. Animal welfare and health aspects of different space allowances and floor types for weaners and rearing pigs

The Chairman explained that the members of the working group have started their activities and the working group met in Brussels on the 27th September; the next meeting are scheduled for the 17th November and 20th December in Brussels.

8.5. Porcine Respiratory and Reproductive Syndrome (PRRS)

The Chairman has already selected the experts and the first meeting is expected to be held in Brussels the first week of December.

8.6. Foot and Mouth Disease

The Chairman explained that the first meeting took place in London on the 27th October. As agreed, the members of the working group include experts from the EU, developing countries, OIE and FAO. Next meeting is to be held in Brussels on 13th December.

8.7. Laboratory Animals

The experts of the working group have not yet been chosen. The activities will start as soon as possible after talks with DG ENVIR on certain aspects to be covered or not by the mandate.

9. NEW MANDATES

No new mandates were received by EFSA to be discussed at the plenary meeting.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

10.1. Self-mandates.

EFSA will present and circulate a new document compiling the agreement reach during the discussion. The main priorities for self tasking were decided as follows:

1. African Swine Fever
2. African Horse Sickness and Blue tongue
3. Welfare of Dairy Cows
4. Transport of dead animals (Ilaria should be consulted on that point).

Welfare of farmed fishes could be treated as a priority 5 after discussion with R Roberts.

Other priorities will be mentioned but the document should state “because priorities may change, the following items may have different ranking positions or even become high priorities”

Task2 “Density, movements of animals and structure of the production” was recommended to be included as a recommendation for the Research priorities of framework program 7th.

Task 5 The current document regarding “Training and core competencies required by the Official Veterinarian (or equivalent)” was discussed. It was recognized the importance of such a problem but there were difficulties in treating it as a self mandate. It was agreed the need to incorporate in the AHAW opinions, recommendations to highlight the crucial role of veterinarians (and others involved e.g. stakeholders) to maintain their ability to detect as early as possible a contagious disease and animal welfare problems. The level of training should be adapted to the level of risk of the introduction of a specific disease in a country. For example, it was mentioned that in the current opinions on Avian Influenza, Rift Valley Fever and Foot and Mouth disease it should be recommended to ensure the training of the professional staff to detect, at the earliest stage, the contagious diseases in the different countries. It was agreed that, in addition, a statement about this problem will be prepared for adoption by the panel during the next meeting.

10.2. Plenary meetings

Next plenary meeting: The Panel members accepted to start the X plenary meeting in Brussels on 14th December at 9.00 am and ending on 17.00 pm. Members were kindly invited to arrive on 13th December.

Plenary meeting on February 2005: Martin Wierup announced that the Rector of the Uppsala University (Sweden) has officially invited the Panel to hold the next meeting on 9th- 10th February in their facilities. A letter will be sent to the chairman of the Panel and to EFSA scientific coordinator. This item will be discussed at the next plenary in December, once the details are provided (shuttles, hotels and meeting room).