



EFSA
European Food Safety Authority

Brussels, 13th April 2004
EFSA/MH/BG/ac/sd
EFSA/BIOHAZ/PLE/

**MINUTES OF THE 5th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS
Held in Brussels on 3-4 March 2004**

AGENDA:

1. Welcome, apologies for absence
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Declaration of interest
4. Matters arising from previous plenary meeting
5. New requests to EFSA.
 - a. Organization of Working Groups
6. Discussion and possible adoption of following opinions
 - a. Revision of meat inspection for lambs and goats
 - b. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the scientific justification for proposing amendments to the United Kingdom Date Based Export Scheme
 - c. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the application of the United Kingdom for moderate risk BSE status
 - d. A request for opinion on the safety vis-à-vis biological risk including TSEs of the application to pastureland of organic fertilizers and soil improvers.
 - e. A request for an opinion on BSE related culling in cattle
 - f. A request on an opinion on BSE risk from bovine tonsil and consumption of ox tongue.
7. Progress reports and discussion on the following draft opinions:
 - a. Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*
 - b. Vaccines to control *Salmonella*
 - c. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs
 - d. Microbiological risks in infant foods
 - e. *Bacillus* and *Clostridium* in foodstuffs
 - f. Revision of meat inspection for beef
 - g. Chronic Wasting Diseases
 - h. Quantitative Risk Assessment
 - i. Animal By-products
 - i. Combustion of tallow in a thermal boiler process for safe disposal of ABP
 - ii. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk including TSE's of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.

8. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
9. Feed-back from Panel members attending WG from other panels
10. AOB
11. Closure of the meeting

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THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS**
Held in Brussels on 3-4 March 2004

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, Christian Ducrot, James Hope, Mac Johnston, Günter Klein, Ernst Lücker, Simone Magnino, Riitta Liisa Maijala, Antonio Martinez López, Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George-John Nychas, Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts, Ivar Vågsholm, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch.

Apologies

Hilde Kruse (3rd and 4th March); Ernst Lücker (3rd March); Mac Johnston (4th March)

EFSA

Bart Goossens, Marta Hugas (Scientific Staff)
Sylvie Daloze and Angela Cohen (Administrative staff)

Commission

John Maher (3rd March), Ronald Dwinger (3rd March) and Taina Sateri (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody.

Apologies were received from Hilde Kruse, Ernst Lücker and Mac Johnston.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETINGS

The Panel noted the adoption of the minutes of the previous plenary meeting by written procedure.

The Animal Health Animal Welfare Panel will establish a self-tasking Working Group on Avian influenza. A member of the BIOHAZ Panel has been invited to participate in this WG.

It was decided to continue brainstorming discussions for self-tasking. Members were invited to draft the background with terms of reference for new topics to be discussed in the next plenary meeting.

5. NEW REQUESTS TO EFSA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORKING GROUPS

5.1. Request for a scientific opinion on the suitability and details of freezing methods to allow human consumption of meat infected with *Trichinella* or *Cysticercus*

The Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards is asked to assess the suitability of cold treatment to kill *Trichinella* parasites or cysticercus cysts in meat of cattle, pigs and wild boar and to assess the suitability of heat treatment to kill *Trichinella* parasites in meat imported from third countries. The terms of reference were discussed and it was agreed to have an opinion ideally adopted by September 2004.

The Chair of the working group was appointed. Suggestions for membership were received and the secretariat will contact the suggested members to set a date for a first meeting in Brussels.

5.2. Request for a risk assessment of a revised inspection of slaughter animals in areas of low prevalence of *Trichinella* (A) or *Cysticercus* (B)

The Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards is asked to deliver opinions on the following terms by March 2005: (A) to assess the risks of not examining meat from pigs originating from *Trichinella*-free farms and to define the conditions under which outdoor access before weaning could be allowed in *Trichinella*-free pig farms; (B) to assess the risks of a simplified meat inspection for the presence of cysticercus cysts in calves kept under specific management conditions.

The terms of reference were discussed and it was agreed to ask Commission services to include a definition for *Trichinella*-free farms.

The Chair of the working group was appointed. Suggestions for membership were received and the secretariat will contact the suggested members to set a date for a first meeting in Brussels. It was agreed to address question (B) in the working group dealing with the "Revision of meat inspection for beef".

5.3. Working Group: Stunning and BSE risk from dissemination of brain particles in blood and carcass.

In view of a possible update of the SSC opinion of 10-11 January 2002 on stunning methods and BSE risks, the Commission requests EFSA to evaluate the available information and the results of studies carried out by the European meat industry. A WG was formed to evaluate the scientific information available and results of a planned French study. The Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare will be asked to share its document on 'Stunning and animal welfare' in terms of general background information.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF THE FOLLOWING OPINIONS

6.1. Revision of meat inspection for lambs and goats

The draft document was distributed and briefly introduced. The summary, conclusions and recommendations sections of the document were discussed thoroughly and commented upon. The Panel decided to include a new paragraph mentioning the conditions to be fulfilled by an “integrated system” as well as to include definitions for an “assembly or regulatory centre” and for a “lot”.

The revised document, taking account of amendments requested will be presented for possible adoption at the next plenary meeting.

6.2. A request for opinion on the safety vis-à-vis biological risk including TSEs of the application to pastureland of organic fertilizers and soil improvers.

The draft report and opinion for this mandate were presented, discussed and adopted. The opinion can be found at http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz_opinions/228_en.html

6.3. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the scientific justification for proposing amendments to the United Kingdom Date Based Export Scheme

6.4. Request for an opinion of the European Food Safety Authority on the application of the United Kingdom for moderate risk BSE status

For requests 6.3 and 6.4, the draft report and opinion were presented and discussed. It was decided to defer the adoption to the next meeting (21-22 April 2004) in order to allow clarifications to be added to some points of discussion.

6.5. A request for an opinion on BSE related culling in cattle

The draft report and opinion were presented and discussed. Some additional data are awaited from Commission services. The draft report and opinion will be presented again at the next plenary meeting in April.

6.6. A request for an opinion on BSE risk from bovine tonsil and consumption of ox tongue.

The draft report and opinion for this mandate were presented, discussed and adopted. The opinion can be found at http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz_opinions/243_en.html

7. PROGRESS REPORTS

7.1. Antimicrobials to control *Salmonella*

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the outcome of the discussions after the second working group meeting and the progress made. A draft of the table of contents was tabled for the meeting and the Panel commented upon it. Main comments were on the types of antimicrobials to be dealing with. The next working group meeting is scheduled after the April's plenary and it is the intention of the working party to submit a draft for discussion at the June plenary meeting.

7.2. Vaccines to control *Salmonella*

The chair/rapporteur briefly presented the table of contents and the various chapters drafted after a second meeting and the Panel commented upon it. The working group will meet again in May. A first draft document will be presented for discussion at the BIOHAZ plenary meeting in June.

7.3. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs

The Secretariat briefed the panel on the state-of-the art of the draft opinion. A first draft is being compiled and the working group will meet again after the April plenary meeting. A first draft document will be tabled for discussion at the plenary meeting in June.

7.4. Microbiological risks in infant foods

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the outcome of the discussion at the second working group meeting which had taken place the day before the BIOHAZ plenary meeting. A member of the industry was invited to attend the meeting to provide information on food processing, formulation, cleaning practices and on the microbiological risks involved in those steps.

7.5. *Bacillus* and *Clostridium* in foodstuffs

A first working group meeting took place the week before the Plenary. The Chairman for the *Clostridium* working group briefly presented the outcome of the discussion. A first draft document will possibly be presented for information at the next plenary meeting. The working group is to invite two new members to help in drafting the *Bacillus* opinion.

7.6. Revision of meat inspection for Beef

A member of the working group briefed the Panel on the outcome of the first meeting. The opinion is being considered as forming part of the series of opinions on revision of meat inspection. Next meeting is scheduled in May.

7.7. Chronic Wasting Disease

The last Working Group meeting was held on 20 February 2004. Good progress was made with the report; additional data and input from companies involved in TSE testing are awaited. Future meetings are scheduled for 20 April and 10 May. Possible adoption foreseen at the Plenary meeting in June 2004.

7.8. Quantitative Assessment of the residual BSE risk

The Chairman of the Working Group briefed the Panel on the outcome of the discussion at the second working group meeting which took place on 12 February 2004. Progress was made on the draft report containing the assumptions for the risk calculations to be done by Det Norske Veritas (DNV). Also a representative of DNV was present at the WG meeting in the afternoon to reply to some questions formulated at the earlier meeting.

8. FEED-BACK BY THE CHAIRMAN ON SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN THE SC OF INTEREST TO THE PANEL

No scientific committee meeting has taken place since the last BIOHAZ Plenary.

9. FEED-BACK FROM PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WORKING GROUPS FROM OTHER PANELS

The Panel member enrolled in the Animal Health and Animal Welfare Working Group on laying hens briefed the Panel on the consequences for safety in different welfare systems after a first meeting which took place the day before the Plenary meeting.

10. AOB

10.1. Comments to requests from Commission on BSE/TSE issues

The secretariat referred to the terms of mandates received from DG-Sanco (DG Health and Consumer Protection) in the field of TSE/BSE's. In a number of cases the final outcome following a series of WG meetings and discussions was that "not enough data are available to support a change to current opinions and therefore the previous opinions remain entirely valid". Also, in a number of recently asked questions the supporting data received was not fully relevant to the question asked. Accordingly, DG Sanco might be asked to consider sending mandates to EFSA when relevant data for analysis was known to be available.

This matter was discussed by the Members of the Panel. It was acknowledged that in terms of TSE's, one has to remain vigilant and be aware of new developments and possible impacts. At the same time it was reasonable that with regard to some specific cases of BSE-related subjects, DG Sanco had requested a review concerning possible changes to an existing opinion and the consequent legislation when relevant new information was not available. This had added further to the workload of the Biohaz Panel and its WG's. In this respect, the role of the Interface Unit is highly relevant, particularly as recently one case for a possible future mandate appeared to have been communicated to EFSA without involvement of that Unit. It is acknowledged that such a situation is encountered less frequently in non-

BSE related questions directed to the Biohaz Panel. Meanwhile the Biohaz Panel and its WG on BSE/TSE is currently anticipating further questions as new scientific data becomes available. This approach also gives rise to the possibility of identifying further TSE-related subjects for self tasking.

10.2. Invitation to Dr Stan Bailey

The Chairman addressed the Panel on the possibility of inviting Dr Stan Bailey, an American expert on *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* to give a presentation to the BIOHAZ Panel next September. Dr Bailey will be in Belgium for another meeting at the time. The Panel welcomed the suggestion and agreed.

10.3. Plenary in Dublin

The Chair informed the Panel that it was now arranged to invite the Biohaz Panel to hold its Plenary of June 2004 in Dublin (Ireland). The Irish Food Safety Authority would host the meeting. A formal invitation will to be sent to the Executive Director of EFSA in due course.

10.4. Possible plenary in Parma in October

The secretariat informed the Members of the Plenary that it was suggested by the EFSA Management to organise one of its Plenary meetings in Parma later this year. It was anticipated that the Biohaz Panel could organise the meeting of October in Parma. This will be further discussed.

10.5. Request to keep the order from the agenda for the plenaries

Following a request from a member of the Panel, the Chair agreed to adhere to the order of business as indicated in the agreed agenda as far as possible..

11. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting was closed at 16.00 on Thursday 4 March 2004. The next plenary meeting is scheduled for 21-22 April 2004.