



**EFSA**  
European Food Safety Authority

Parma, 20 December 2005

## **JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE HUMAN HEALTH, FOOD AND VETERINARY EXPERTS ON DATA COLLECTION OF ZOOSE AND FOOD-BORNE OUTBREAKS**

### **MINUTES OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> MEETING Held in Parma on 22 November 2005**

#### **PARTICIPANTS:**

---

Dr. Franz Allerberger (Austria), Dr. Peter Much (Austria), Dr. Patrick Van Dessel (Belgium), Dr. Luc Vanholme (Belgium), Dr. Venceslava Taseva (Bulgaria), Dr. Marta Prikazska' (Czech Republic), Dr. Petr Satran (Czech Republic), Dr. Steen Ethelberg (Denmark), Dr. Natalia Kerbo (Estonia), Dr. Dr Piret Priisalu (Estonia), Dr. Terhi Laaksonen (Finland), Dr. Pierre-Alexandre Beloeil (France), Dr. Emmanuelle Espie (France), Dr. Andrea Gervelmeyer (Germany), Dr. Matthias Hartung (Germany), Prof. Klaus Stark (Germany), Dr Dimitris Vourvidis (Greece), Dr. Katalin Szabó (Hungary), Dr Paolo Calistri (Italy), Dr. Valentina Rizzi (Italy), Dr. Halldór Runólfsson (Iceland), Dr. Patricia Garvey (Ireland), Dr. Antra Bormane (Latvia), Dr. Vaidotas Kiudulas (Latvia), Dr. Nicole Werner-Keiss (Latvia), Dr. Patrick Hau (Luxembourg), Dr. Joseph Schon (Luxembourg), Dr. Cristina Chricop Micallef (Malta), Dr. Quentin Lawson (Malta), Dr. Merete Hofshagen (Norway), Dr. Karin Nygård (Norway), Dr. Jacek Osek (Poland), Dr. Andrzej Zielinsk (Poland), Dr. Sergio Rodeia (Portugal), Dr. Adriana Costache (Romania), Dr. Katica Florjanc (Slovenia), Dr. Eva Grilc (Slovenia), Dr. Dr José Luis Paramio Lucas (Spain), Dr. Gloria Hernandez Pezzi (Spain), Dr. Luisa Pulido Puente (Spain), Dr. Juerg Danuser (Switzerland), Dr. Yvone Doorduyn (The Netherlands), Dr. Rob van Oosterom (The Netherlands), Dr. Harry Bailie (United Kingdom), Dr. Jim McLauchlin (United Kingdom), Dr. Gordon Nichols (United Kingdom), Dr. Annemarie Käsbohrer (BfR), Dr. Peter Frändberg (BSN), Dr. Stephan Bronzwaer (the Commission), Dr. Sarolta Idei (the Commission), Dr. Karoline de la Hoz (ECDC), Dr. Frank Boelaert (EFSA), Dr. Marta Hugas (EFSA), Herman Koëter (EFSA), Dr. Pia Makela (EFSA), Dr. Jorge Serratos Vilageliu (EFSA), Dr. Chaisemartin (OIE), Dr. Birgitte Borck (ZCC)

Hélène Fenech, Miriam Grasselli, Alwyn Borg Myatt (EFSA, Administrative staff)

#### **MINUTES:**

---

## **1. Welcome and opening of the meeting**

Dr Herman Koëter, Director of Science, from European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), welcomed the participants and indicated that this was the first joint meeting of the public health and veterinary and food experts to discuss the data collection on zoonoses. The meeting was organised by EFSA, in collaboration with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

## **2. Presentations on EFSA and ECDC**

Dr Koëter gave a presentation on EFSA's current activities, in particular in the fields of risk assessment and data collection. Dr Karoline Fernandez de la Hoz, from ECDC spoke about ECDC's role and tasks related to zoonoses. Lastly, Dr Jorge Serratos Vilageliu from EFSA gave an update on EFSA's work regarding avian influenza risk assessments. The slides of the presentations are annexed.

## **3. Integration of the information on zoonoses cases in humans to the information on zoonoses in animals and food: practical arrangements and interpretation of the data**

Dr Stefan Bronzwaer, the Commission, Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General (DG SANCO), the Health Threats unit, presented the plan to integrate data on zoonoses in humans with data on food and animals, which has been adopted by the Commission's ESCON Committee (the Epidemiological Surveillance Component of the Community Network). The other relevant stakeholders gave their comments on the plan. Dr Karoline Fernandez de la Hoz presented ECDC's proposal for data transfer: Member States would send their data to Basic Surveillance network (BSN), International Surveillance Network for Enteric Infections (Enter-Net), and Surveillance of Tuberculosis in Europe (EUROTB), and these networks would make the clearance of the datasets. Then, ECDC and the relevant networks, would analyse data and after that data would be sent to EFSA. ECDC would also be involved in the joint analyses of data from human cases, animals and foodstuffs. Sarolta Idei, on behalf on DG SANCO's Biological Risks unit, spoke about the legal framework, and underlined the importance of collaboration between the different sectors. Pia Mäkelä pointed out, on behalf of EFSA, that the form of the data received, the organisation of the analyses of the data, and the timetable, still need to be agreed upon. She also endorsed the early collaboration between the human health and veterinary/food sectors in preparation of the national zoonoses reports. The current reporting tables in the web-based zoonoses reporting system will still be kept for national use in 2006. Peter Fräsling from BSN said that BSN has already prepared a manual on the variables to be reported on zoonoses. Furthermore, a dummy run has been organised lately for the data collection. Relevant questions for BSN were about the predefined set of values for variables, the availability of data, and who will perform the analyses. Birgitte Bork from the Zoonoses Collaboration Centre, presented their institute and its activities in the preparation of the draft Community Summary Report. The slides of the presentations are annexed.

The Member States addressed the following set of questions concerning the integration of information of zoonoses in humans with information on animals and food: Do they agree with the proposed data flow for information on zoonoses cases in humans? Where there problems in the dummy run organised by ECDC and BSN? When should the coordination between the human health and food/veterinary sectors (should) take place? What is the most important information concerning human zoonoses cases that should be included in the Community Zoonoses Report, together with the information on zoonoses in animals and food? Which is the right way of analyzing the information on human cases in the zoonoses report?

Member States and other participants of the meeting, presented numerous comments and raised a number of important points. There was general support for the proposed scheme on the data transfer suggested by ECDC. The centralization of the reporting systems was also seen as being necessary and useful. Some Member States want to be involved in the data analyses at the Community level as early as possible. It was pointed out that the sets of information sent for different disease networks are not the same. There was a request to make the lists of national contact persons of different networks available. For some countries, it could be difficult to submit validated data on human cases by end of May. A number of countries shared the view that the quality of data collected could be improved, and that data gaps should not be hidden. To this end, feedback to reporters would be useful.

The integration of the data and joint data interpretation were generally perceived to be important. The countries emphasized the need for good collaboration between the human health and the food and veterinary sectors. Many countries have already had good experience of this. Several Member States pointed out that this collaboration should take place as soon as the national zoonoses reports are prepared, as the data on human cases is needed for the interpretation of the national situation. A second stage of collaboration would be necessary during the consultation of the draft zoonoses report.

Several countries would like to keep the current tables for human cases in the web-based zoonoses reporting system, especially those who would like to publish the report at national level, therefore there is a need to have the human data in the same report. In general, the reporting tables should not be changed too often and rapidly, as this would cause practical problems for the Member States. Moreover, the need to agree on the rights to access the data was raised.

A number of Member States regarded more detailed geographical information on human cases as desirable (e.g. region of the case). The poor comparability of data, and underreporting, were seen as hindrances of the analysis of human data. Some countries considered the comparison of yearly numbers of cases more appropriate than incidences. Generally, it would be useful to clarify the rationale of the data collection.

One Spanish participant suggested an alternative scheme and timetable of the data flow, where Member States would be consulted on the human data before submitting it to EFSA.

The participants were invited to send further comments by e-mail to EFSA ([pia.makela@efsa.eu.int](mailto:pia.makela@efsa.eu.int)). It was concluded that ECDC and EFSA, in co-operation with the Commission, the relevant networks and ZCC, will prepare, in the light of what was discussed during the meeting, a detailed proposal for the data transfer and the collaboration between different parties at the Community level. This plan will be shared with Member States' representatives for comments before final adoption.

#### **4. Data collection on food-borne outbreaks**

Pia Mäkelä presented EFSA's plans to organise the collection of data on food-borne outbreaks in the framework of the Zoonoses Directive 2003/99/EC. This data collection applies to results of the investigations carried out by the Member States. A new contractor will assist EFSA in developing an improved reporting system at the Community level, which would seek to meet the needs of different sectors involved. To this end, an inventory of the current reporting systems and the needs of different stakeholders will be carried out among the Member States and Community institutions and agencies. A joint working group will be established to coordinate the work of the contractor.

During the general discussion, some Member States asked whether the food-borne outbreak reports will be incorporated in the Community Summary Report. The reporting of international outbreaks (e.g. covering several countries) was also addressed. A couple of Member States raised the need to promote building databases for serotyping and fingerprinting of the isolates of the causative agents.

EFSA promised that these questions will be considered by the working group, which will coordinate the development of the improved reporting systems. Member States, the Commission, ECDC and other relevant stakeholders, will be asked to suggest candidates to the working group in the near future. The Member States will be consulted through ECDC's Advisory Forum and the Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection.

#### **5. Conclusions and the closing of the meeting**

The participants were thanked for their active and constructive contribution(s) during (in) the meeting. It was a good start for continuous collaboration and the intention is to organise similar meetings on a regular basis, maybe once a year, by ECDC and EFSA.

ESA will prepare the draft minutes of the meeting and they will be sent for comments to all participants.

Annexes:        Slides presented at the meeting  
                  Comments received after meeting