

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE OIE *AD HOC* GROUP ON VETERINARY EMERGENCIES Paris, 2 – 4 July 2019

The first meeting of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Veterinary Emergencies (hereinafter the Group) was held at OIE Headquarters, Paris, France, from 2 to 4 July 2019.

1. Opening

Dr Matthew Stone, Deputy Director General "International Standards and Science", welcomed the participants to the meeting. He explained that the group had been convened to 1. Draft a guidance document on planning and running disease outbreak simulation exercises, and 2. Design example scenarios for regional exercises which would support implementation of an OIE-FAO-INTERPOL 'Building resilience against agroterrorism and agro-crime' (hereinafter the Project). The overall aim of the Project was to foster stronger collaboration between veterinary services and the law enforcement sector whilst building capacity to respond to emergencies.

2. Appointment of chairperson and rapporteur

The meeting was chaired by Dr Gary Vroegindewey, and Drs Kathy Gibson and Andre van Halderen were designated as rapporteurs.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Dr Vroegindewey introduced the provisional agenda, which was subsequently adopted by the Group as agenda for the meeting. The agenda and list of participants are attached as [Appendices I](#) and [II](#), respectively.

4. Drafting guidelines on best practices for simulation exercises

The Group was informed that the aim of the guidance document was to optimise the use of simulation exercises in building capacity for emergency preparedness by guiding Member Countries on the decision to run an exercise, the selection of appropriate type of exercise, and the process of design and implementation. It was highlighted that the guidance should be focussed on principles (rather than specific actions), adaptable to a range of settings (including countries which had not previously carried out an exercise), and be scalable, accounting for varying levels of veterinary service capacity and resources. It was also agreed that the OIE guidance should be succinct, useful and fit for purpose.

To facilitate the process, the Group was provided with example templates including OIE guidelines on investigating suspicious biological events and WHO's practical guide for developing and conducting simulation exercises to test and validate pandemic influenza preparedness plans. The Group also discussed guidance provided by United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and the Sendai framework. The Group agreed that the OIE guidance should reference these documents and that it should take an all hazards approach.

Many existing guidance documents applied to countries which were experienced in exercising and which had capacity and resources for emergency management. The challenge would be to develop guidance for countries with less experience and fewer emergency management resources. It would also be important to not use overly complicated procedures or structures which could not be adapted to lower resource settings.

The Group was then divided into two groups and each group was tasked with developing a template for the guidance document, ensuring that the key principles of simulation exercises were included. The outputs from the two groups were then merged into one document and the Group was reconvened to agree on a final

template, and to discuss more detailed content which would go under each section of the template.

The Group agreed on the template which contained the list of content to be added, and that the guidelines would require further refinement. The draft guidelines would be further refined by the OIE Secretariat, shared virtually with the Group for review and finalized at a future smaller meeting of the *ad hoc* group before submission to OIE Senior Management and the OIE Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases.

Lastly, the term ‘simulation exercise’ is used in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code, there is no definition in the glossary. Acknowledging the need for a concise definition the group defined simulation exercise as:

A simulation exercise is a controlled, scenario-driven activity for training or assessment of capabilities and plans.

5. Developing scenarios for multi-country simulation exercises

Acknowledging the importance of regional and international cooperation in responding to emergencies with a focus on agro-crime and agro-terrorism, in year 2 of the Project (2020/2021), simulation exercises would be held in several regions. The exercises would aim to strengthen cooperation between countries in the regions and to build links between veterinary services and the law enforcement sectors.

The Group was asked to brainstorm example scenarios for simulation exercises which could form the basis for further discussion on exercise design for year 2 of the Project. The proposed draft scenarios would be provided to FAO (who would be responsible for supporting the exercises) to assist countries in developing appropriate formats for the exercises. The Group was divided into 4 smaller subgroups, each representing 1 region. Experts were appointed to each subgroup based on their knowledge and experience of that region. To enhance regional representation two experts were also connected remotely by conference call. The Group was reminded that scenarios should be as realistic as possible, regionally adapted, and considering political or cultural sensitivities.

6. Adoption of the report

The Group adopted the report prepared by the rapporteurs assisted by the OIE secretariat.

Appendix I

OIE AD HOC GROUP ON VETERINARY EMERGENCIES
Paris, 2-4 July 2019

Agenda

- 9:30 Welcome- Dr Matthew Stone, OIE Deputy Director General
Introductions
Appointment of chair and rapporteur
Adoption of the agenda and terms of reference
Draft OIE guidance for best practices for simulation exercises
- 17:00 Adjourn

Wednesday, 3 July 2019

- 9:00 Reconvene and continue work on draft guidance
- 16:00 Adoption of draft guidance document
- 17:00 Adjourn
- 19:30 Dinner

Thursday, 4 July 2019

- 9:00 Breakout groups by region to develop and review templates and scenarios for regional simulation exercises including a focus on agro-crime and agro-terrorism

North Africa- Salon Leclainche

The Middle East- Salon Blajan

South America- Salon Vittoz

South-East Asia- Mediacenter 3ème

12.30 Lunch

Salon Vittoz

- 14:00 Presentation of scenarios
- 17:00 Closure of meeting
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MEETING OF THE OIE AD HOC GROUP ON VETERINARY EMERGENCIES

Paris, 2-4 July 2019

List of Participants

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