

# ***Ad hoc* Group on the evaluation of official control programmes for dog-mediated rabies of Members**

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Virtual

4 and 6 October 2023

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A virtual meeting of the *ad hoc* Group on the Evaluation of official control programmes for dog-mediated rabies of Members for WOAHP endorsement (hereafter the Group) was held on 4 and 6 October 2023.

## **1. Opening**

Dr Montserrat Arroyo, Deputy Director General for International Standards and Science of WOAHP, welcomed the Group and the representative of the Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases (hereafter the Scientific Commission). Dr Arroyo thanked the experts for their availability and contribution to the work of WOAHP and extended her appreciation to their institutes and national governments for allowing their participation in this meeting. Dr Arroyo highlighted the importance of the procedure for official recognition of animal health status and for endorsement of official control programmes and thanked the Group for its contribution to this important mandate of WOAHP.

According to the established WOAHP procedures, she reminded the Group of the confidentiality of the information, for declaring any potential conflict of interest and thanked the experts for having signed the forms prior to their participation in this evaluation.

Dr Arroyo encouraged the Group to provide detailed feedback identifying the main gaps and points for improvement to the applicant Member in case of a negative outcome. She also asked the Group to provide informative recommendations on the work plan and performance indicators to support the Member in making good progress along the endorsed programme, if the outcome would be positive.

The experts and WOAHP welcomed Dr Claude T Sabeta as a new member of the Group.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of Chairperson and Rapporteur**

Dr Thomas Müller chaired the meeting and Dr Katinka de Balogh acted as rapporteur with the support of the WOAHP Secretariat. The Group endorsed the proposed agenda.

The Terms of reference, agenda and list of participants are presented as Appendices 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

The Group was informed that declared interests were reviewed by WOAHP, and it was agreed that none represented a potential conflict in evaluating the application at this meeting.

## **3. Evaluation of an application from a Member for the endorsement of its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies**

The Group assessed a request from a Member for the endorsement of its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies. Based on the final recommendation of the Scientific Commission concluding that the application did not meet the requirements of the *Terrestrial Code*, the dossier was referred back to the applicant Member.

## **4. Follow-up on annual reconfirmations from Members having a WOAHP endorsed official control programme**

The Group was informed by the WOAHP secretariat on the follow-up process on the WOAHP endorsed control programmes through the annual reconfirmations. The Group appreciated to receive concise updates on the progress made by Members and offered its support to provide recommendations in relevant areas highlighted by the secretariat the Scientific Commission.

## **5. Finalisation and adoption of the report**

The Group reviewed and amended the draft report. The Group agreed that the report would be subject to a short period of circulation amongst the Group for additional comments and endorsement before final submission to the Scientific Commission. Upon circulation, the Group agreed that the report captured the discussions.

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.../Appendices

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## Appendix 1 Terms of reference

### VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMMES FOR DOG-MEDIATED RABIES OF MEMBERS

4 and 6 October 2023

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#### Terms of reference

##### Purpose

The purpose of the *ad hoc* Group on the evaluation of dog-mediated rabies official control programmes of Members (the Group) is to evaluate applications for the endorsement of official control programmes for dog-mediated rabies of Members. In addition, the Group is requested to provide an opinion on the follow-up on annual reconfirmations from Members having an WOAAH endorsed official control programme.

##### Background

In accordance with the [procedure for official recognition of animal health status](#), Members can have an official dog-mediated rabies control programme endorsed by WOAAH through the adoption of a resolution by the World Assembly of Delegates (the Assembly) in May every year. A Member wishing to have its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies endorsed by WOAAH should complete and submit the relevant [questionnaire](#) and comply with all requirements specified in the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* for [infection with rabies virus](#). The Scientific Commission for Animal Diseases ([Scientific Commission](#)) is responsible for undertaking, on behalf of the Assembly, the assessment of Members' applications for their compliance with WOAAH standards. The assessment carried out by the Scientific Commission is based on the recommendations formulated by a relevant *ad hoc* Group. *Ad hoc* groups are convened under the authority of and report to the Director General.

##### Specific issues to be addressed

The Group will evaluate Members' applications in detail on their compliance with the requirements specified in the *Terrestrial Code* for dog-mediated rabies. Based on the evaluations, the Group will provide its conclusions and recommendations to the Scientific Commission.

##### Prerequisites

The Group members should:

- Sign the Undertaking on Confidentiality of information (if not done already);
- Complete the Declaration of Interest Form;
- Understand that the membership of the Group may be retained between its meetings to ensure continuity of the work.

##### Actions to deliver

###### Before the meeting

Upon reception of an application from a Member, the Status Department (SD) conducts a preliminary screening to check the conformity of the dossier (structure of the dossier in accordance with the SOP and with the [questionnaire](#), main sections of the questionnaire, regular notification to WOAAH, payment of the fee, Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) report, etc.). If an information gap is identified, the SD requests additional information from the Member.

As the PVS reports are bound by the rules on confidentiality of information of WOAAH, the SD and experts will consider for the evaluation the available PVS report(s) if not obsolete (PVS reports from more than five years ago) or confidential.

The SD will send the working documents to the Group, including the dossiers received from applicant Members, at least one month before the Group meeting (i.e., **4 September 2023**).

The experts can request support from the SD at any time.

The SD suggests the nomination of a Chair and Rapporteur for the Group's consideration.

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The SD can suggest a preparatory meeting with the Chair, the Rapporteur or all experts to address specific points in advance, if needed.

The experts are expected to:

- Be familiar with Chapters [7.7](#) and [8.15](#) of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Evaluate and study in detail all dossiers provided by WOAAH;
- Take into account any other information available in the public domain that is considered pertinent for the evaluation of the dossiers;
- Summarise the dossiers according to the *Terrestrial Code* requirements by completing the summary tables provided by the SD (the summary tables will be provided at a later stage along with the working documents for the meeting). Experts are expected to capture and summarise in each corresponding section of the summary table the main gaps as well as strengths identified during the assessment of the dossiers, using extracted texts or reference to pages/annexes from the application;
- Draft questions to the applicant Members whenever the analysis of the dossiers identifies incomplete or unclear information;
- Submit to the SD the completed summary tables for each application together with possible questions for the applicant Members at least 10 days before the teleconference and preferably by **22 September 2023**;

The SD will compile the summary tables and the questions to be forwarded to the applicant Members before the teleconference. All subsequent information and material provided by a Member will be forwarded to the Group.

#### During the meeting

- Agree on the appointment of the Chair and Rapporteur of the meeting (the Chair will lead the discussion and the Rapporteur will ensure that the report reflects the discussion and captures the detailed assessment of the dossiers);
- Mention any potential conflict of interest and, if relevant, withdraw him/herself from the discussion;
- Contribute to the discussions;
- Provide a detailed report in order to recommend, to the Scientific Commission, the Member(s) and/or zone(s) to have (or not) WOAAH endorsement of official control programme for dog-mediated rabies, and to indicate any information gaps or specific areas that should be addressed in the future by the applicant Members.

If during the teleconference the Group decides that additional information should be requested from an applicant Member before an informed conclusion can be drawn, the SD can request it and forward the additional information to the Group at a later date. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the finalization of the assessment and for ensuring that the views of all members of the Group are taken into consideration.

Should the Group not be able to complete its Terms of Reference during this meeting, experts' contributions will be solicited after the meeting, including by teleconference if needed.

#### After the meeting

The SD will circulate the draft report after the teleconference is over. Experts are expected to contribute to the finalisation of the report within approximately one week.

The SD will circulate the final version of the report to the Group once endorsed by the Scientific Commission and is published online.

#### **Deliverables**

A detailed report to recommend to the Scientific Commission whether an applicant Member(s) should have (or not) its/their official control programme for dog-mediated rabies endorsed by WOAAH. The report should indicate any information gaps or specific areas that should be addressed in the future by the Members. In addition, clear guidance regarding the need and scope of revision of the questionnaire for application for endorsement by WOAAH of an official control programme for dog-mediated rabies.

#### **Reporting / timeline**

WOAH will circulate the draft report no more than seven days after the teleconference (no later than 13 October 2023) and the Group will finalise its report within ten days (indicative deadline: **23 October 2023**).

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## Appendix 2 Agenda

### VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE *AD HOC* GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMME FOR DOG-MEDIATED RABIES OF MEMBERS 4 AND 6 OCTOBER 2023

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#### AGENDA

1. Opening
  2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of Chair and Rapporteur
  3. Evaluation of an application from a Member for the endorsement of its official control programme for dog-mediated rabies
  4. Follow-up on annual reconfirmations from Members having a WOAHA endorsed official control programme
  5. Finalization and adoption of the report
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### Appendix 3 List of Participants

#### AD HOC GROUP ON THE EVALUATION OF OFFICIAL CONTROL PROGRAMME FOR DOG-MEDIATED RABIES OF MEMBERS 4 and 6 OCTOBER 2023

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#### List of Participants

##### MEMBERS

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Dr Thomas Müller Institute of Molecular Virology and Cell Biology, Friedrich-Loeffler Institut, Federal Research Institute for Animal Health Greifswald GERMANY	Dr Katinka de Balogh Visiting Scientist Infectious Diseases and Immunology Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Utrecht Utrecht THE NETHERLANDS	Prof. Claude T Sabeta Faculty of Veterinary Science Department of Veterinary Tropical Diseases Onderstepoort Pretoria SOUTH AFRICA
Prof. Ehab Abdel Rahman Abu-Basha Department of Basic Medical Veterinary Sciences Jordan University of Science and Technology JORDAN	Dr Pebi Purwo Suseno (invited but could not attend) Senior Veterinary Officer Directorate of Animal Health Directorate General of Livestock and Animal Health Services Ministry of Agriculture Jakarta INDONESIA	Dr Ryan Wallace Poxvirus and Rabies Branch Division of High-Consequence Pathogens and Pathology National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Atlanta UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

##### REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMISSION

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Dr Trevor Drew  
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