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REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE OIE FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE AND OTHER EPIZOOTICS COMMISSION

Paris, 13-17 September 1999

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A meeting of the OIE Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Other Epizootics Commission was held at the OIE headquarters from 13 to 17 September 1999. The agenda and list of participants are given in Appendices I and II respectively.

The participants were welcomed by the Director General of the OIE, Dr J. Blancou. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Commission, Dr W.G. Sterritt.

1. Informal Review of world epizootic situation

Foot and mouth disease

Dr P. Kitching reviewed the recent spread of a single aggressive type O strain of FMD virus from the Middle East to Taipei China. The strain was identified in India in 1990, caused high lamb mortality in Iran and Iraq in 1994-1999, and also caused outbreaks in Greece and Bulgaria in 1996. In 1999, this strain was associated with outbreaks in the People's Republic of China, and a cattle-adapted strain of the same virus was identified in Taipei China. Protection is provided by vaccine prepared against the 0 Manisa (0 R2/75 or 0 ND53/79) strain.

A type A strain identified as A/IRN/22/99, with a genetic composition that is 20% different from any other strain in the World Reference Laboratory (WRL) database, was discussed. This finding reflects either significant changes in the virus over a short time or that such strains existed but were never sent to WRL.

An Asia type 1 virus caused extensive outbreaks in Iran in 1999, raising additional concerns of the possibility of spread to Turkey and the Caucasus. This strain is not included in vaccines used in that area.

In South America, reported outbreaks were mainly type 'O', but type 'A' remains the most important strain, as was diagnosed in the Ecuadorian-Peruvian Border. Peru had not reported FMD for 27 months before this occurrence. Eradication measures were taken by the country. Earlier this year, a suspicion of FMD in southern Bolivia elicited close cooperation between this country and Argentina, to curb the possible spread of the disease with a massive vaccination campaign (in Bolivia).

In Africa, large outbreaks were recorded due to SAT1 in Tanzania and Burundi. Dr Y. Leforban provided a draft document describing type 'O' outbreaks in the Mediterranean Maghreb in early 1999.

Other disease

Bluetongue in Bulgaria is present and spreading despite the absence of the vector *Culicoides imicola*. A similar situation occurred earlier with African horse sickness in Spain. These events emphasise the need to assume that all *Culicoides* species should be considered to be competent vectors for the viruses causing these diseases.

2. Evaluation of country submissions

The situation of the Ukraine relative to freedom from FMD was reviewed in view of objections made by a Member Country and subsequent information provided by the Ukraine. The Commission recommended that the Ukraine should be recognised by the OIE as a country free from FMD without vaccination.

Other submissions were considered and requests for further information will be forwarded to submitting Member Countries.

The Delegate of Argentina, Dr L.O. Barcos, met with the Commission briefly to discuss his country's forthcoming submission for recognition. He advised the Commission of a simulation exercise on FMD to be held in Argentina in October of this year.

The need for surveillance standards that would assist Member Countries in FMD submissions was identified.

Dr Kitching and Dr V.E.V. Saraiva, with the assistance of Dr G.R. Thomson, wildlife expert, will review existing standards for other diseases and draft proposed standards for consideration by the Commission at its next meeting in January 2000.

3. Rinderpest

The Commission was joined by Drs P.C. Lefèvre, A. Provost and A.D. James and a discussion of rinderpest ensued. Issues regarding the application of the *Recommended Standards for Epidemiological Surveillance Systems for Rinderpest*, raised by a representative of OAU/IBAR[1], were considered. The Commission determined that it was not in a position to pre-approve surveillance plans for a number of reasons. Several other issues were addressed, in particular, the need for the provision of advice on surveillance plans, especially regarding stratification, that are adaptable to each national situation.

The Commission heard concerns that the competitive ELISA[2] was insensitive to antibody produced by the rinderpest virus lineage II, and will forward this information to the Standards Commission.

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1 OAU/IBAR: Organization for African Unity/Inter-African Bureau of Animal Resources

2 ELISA: enzyme linked immunosorbent assay

It was determined by the Commission that a questionnaire process, based on the existing FMD evaluation process, would be useful to Member Countries preparing submissions to OIE for recognition of rinderpest status. Dr M. Rweyemamu agreed to draft a questionnaire for consideration by the Commission in January 2000.

4. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy questionnaire and guidelines for its completion

The International Committee requested that the Commission draft guidelines that would assist the OIE to evaluate claims from a country or zone of freedom from bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in time for the 68th General Session. The Commission considered that these guidelines would address Articles 3.2.13.1 and 3.2.13.2 of the *International Animal Health Code* (the *Code*) insofar as requirements for country or zone freedom are concerned.

Evaluation of the risk analysis required by point 1) of Article 3.2.13.1. of the *Code* will be based on the document *Guidelines for evaluating a risk analysis with regard to country or zone's BSE freedom*, as provided to the Commission by its authors, Drs S. MacDiarmid, W. Hueston and Andrea Vicari.

The Chairman will prepare a draft questionnaire based on that document for consideration in January. A paper from the United States Centre for Epidemiology and Animal Health on risk analysis harmonisation will be consulted.

Discussion continued on the assessment of the criteria defined in point 2) to 5) of Article 3.2.13.1. of the *Code*. The following recommendations were taken:

- Criteria 2 – Education programme

  Evidence will be required to demonstrate the structure of the programme, the length of time it has been in place, and how often and to whom the programme has been delivered.

- Criteria 3 – Notification

  Documented evidence of laws, regulations and directives and the dates enacted will be required. The Commission will expect to see records of the number of suspect cases reported and the diagnoses made for these cases. Information concerning the disposition of the carcasses of these cases should also be provided.

- Criteria 4 – Surveillance and monitoring

  Records demonstrating compliance with Appendix 4.5.1.3 of the *Code* will be required and a description of the surveillance and monitoring programme will be necessary. In addition, a quantitative summary of the investigations to date and the laboratory results will be required.

- Criteria 5 – Approved laboratories

  Certification that laboratories used comply with Section 1.1 of the *Code* will be necessary. Evidence will be necessary that laboratories conduct those tests for BSE listed in the *OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines* as official tests.

5. Joint meeting with the OIE International Animal Health Code Commission

The record of these discussions are included in the minutes of the Code Commission meeting.

6. Other matters

Indications for the implementation of stamping-out measures for animal disease control in Africa

The OIE Regional Commission for Africa had recommended that the OIE and the FAO cooperate to prepare a technical document specifying practical indications for stamping-out within the framework of animal diseases control[3]. Dr Rweyemamu will advise the Central Bureau of current FAO initiatives of this subject in order to coordinate the efforts of the two organisations.

Technical item of the Commission for the 68th General Session of the International Committee

The Commission proposes the topic 'Recent Developments in the Identification of Animals and the Traceability of Animal Products in Relation to International Trade' as a technical item of the Commission for the 68th General Session of the International Commission in May 2000. The Central Bureau will propose names of potential speakers.

Proposal for OIE sponsorship of workshop on assessment of country freedom

The OIE was approached to be a sponsor of a workshop on a quantitative risk assessment method that could be used to declare a country/region free of a disease. The Commission believed that the approach described may have merit. However, they recommended that the OIE not sponsor the workshop, but attend as a participant. Dr Sterritt agreed to represent the OIE at this workshop.

Foot and mouth disease monograph of the European Pharmacopoeia

Dr Leforban informed the meeting that a Working Group had been created by the Standing Technical Committee of the European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease to prepare proposals for amendments to the FMD Monograph of the European Pharmacopoeia.

7. Reconfirmation of foot and mouth disease status

The Commission wished to remind Delegates of Member Countries which are recognised as having some FMD free status that Resolution N° XII adopted during the 65th General Session of the International Committee requires them to reconfirm by letter to the Central Bureau in November of each year that both their status and the criteria by which this status was recognised remain the same.

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.../Appendices

[3] Recommendation No. 2 adopted by the OIE Regional Commission for Africa on 29 January 1999 and endorsed by the International Committee of the OIE on 19 May 1999

Appendix I

REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE OIE
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE AND OTHER EPIZOOTICS COMMISSION

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Agenda

1. Informal review of world epizootic situation
2. Evaluation of country submissions
3. Rinderpest
4. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy questionnaire and guidelines for its completion
5. Joint meeting with the OIE International Animal Health Code Commission
6. Other matters
7. Reconfirmation of foot and mouth disease status

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Appendix II

REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE OIE
FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE AND OTHER EPIZOOTICS COMMISSION

Paris, 13-17 September 1999

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