



2012 National FMD Stakeholder Forum

Forum communiqué

The National FMD Stakeholder Forum brought together governments, peak livestock industries and other stakeholders to progress priority national policy issues relating to foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) preparedness and response capacity. The objectives of the forum were to:

1. Share information related to current and future FMD preparedness activities
2. Have an open dialogue on priority issues relating to FMD and gather stakeholders views on priority issues and concerns, including on:
 - the emergency use of FMD vaccination
 - efforts to enhance field surveillance and emergency response resourcing
 - progress towards the finalisation of response policy via the FMD Ausvetplan disease strategy manual, and planning for a national livestock standstill exercise.
3. Promote collaboration, agreement and action on priority issues (such as those above), and discuss how responsibilities can be effectively shared to ensure that gains are sustainable.

Participants of the 2012 National FMD Stakeholder Forum:

- AGREED that FMD remains an ongoing threat, and that collaborative government and industry action and investment must be ongoing to ensure national FMD preparedness
- NOTED the significant progress made in FMD preparedness by the collaborative efforts of all relevant governments and industry, following the release of the Matthews report in 2011.
- ACKNOWLEDGED the need for shared responsibility in FMD preparedness with each stakeholder's contribution and level of preparedness critical to Australia's overall FMD readiness.

DAFF FMD PROGRAM AND NBC ACTION PLAN

- NOTED the progress made under the DAFF FMD Program and National Biosecurity Committee FMD Action Plan to address priority issues identified by the Matthews report
- AGREED to continue to support national efforts relating to FMD preparedness by actively contributing to key policy discussions and proactively communicating with their respective constituents



GLOBAL FMD Update

- NOTED the global situation relating to
 - FMD (SAT2 and Asia1)
 - high risk neighbours
 - need for ongoing vigilance
 - the variable performance of vaccine in Turkey

SWILL FEEDING

- NOTED the work of the Sub-Committee on Emergency Animal Disease (SCEAD) Swill Feeding Working Group and the Animal Health Committee's (AHC) agreement on a national definition for swill and swill feeding
- SUPPORTED the inclusion of the harmonised definition in jurisdictional legislation
- SUPPORTED the development of an ongoing national compliance program as a priority

IGWG

- NOTED the report of the Industry Government Working Group (IGWG) and key areas of progress, including the production of food safety statements for use with retailers and consumers
- RECOMMENDED that industry and government develop a communications strategy that includes dissemination of the food safety statements, the engagement of food retailers and communication with consumers.
- RECOMMENDED that industries assist their stakeholders to develop business continuity plans that cover EAD incidents. It was SUGGESTED that smaller industries could collaborate and pool resources to develop plans for their respective industries.

GENERAL SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE CAPACITY

- NOTED the work of the AHC General Surveillance Working Group and the AHC Resource Benchmarking Working Group in providing clarity on priority risks and resourcing needs for FMD surveillance and response across Australia
- RECOGNISED the need for enhanced capacity in field surveillance and response, and communicate to farmers the need to investigate and report sick animals.
- NOTED that a National EAD Training program governance group will have oversight of EAD training activity and develop a nationally strategic approach to EAD training to enhance response capacity.
- NOTED progress with the LEADDR network and DAFF to improve national FMD laboratory capacity
- NOTED ongoing work to investigate ways to improve engagement of private veterinarians and other groups in EAD responses



- NOTED ongoing work on strengthening national carcass disposal capacity
- RECOMMENDED that efforts to improve general surveillance should seek to engage the state farm organisations and other local farming groups.

RESPONSE POLICY and FMD AUSVETPLAN

- NOTED the progress of the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN) FMD disease control strategy and the extensive consultation amongst all government and industry stakeholders
- AGREED to support the final stages of the process to ensure that the manual may be finalised by Animal Health Australia's (AHA) September 2012 roundtable for subsequent submission to the Standing Council on Primary Industries (SCoPI) in October.
- RECOGNISED the need for a National Livestock Standstill Simulation Exercise and REQUESTED that National Biosecurity Committee clarify the scope and objectives of the national standstill exercise, and also governments' commitment at the earliest opportunity
- NOTED that inadequate traceability arrangements in one sector greatly increases the risk to other sectors, given that the effectiveness of control measures will rely upon how quickly susceptible animals can be traced
- NOTED that further work needs to be done to establish the potential risk posed by feral animals
- NOTED the need for the policy on compensation to be reviewed.

VACCINATION

- NOTED the National Vaccination Policy Statement as endorsed by SCoPI in April 2012, noting that vaccination is no longer considered a measure of last resort
- NOTED and SUPPORTED the role and objectives of the Vaccination Experts Advisory Group (VEAG), including the development of further guidance on the use of vaccination by the end of 2012
- AGREED to contribute to the development of the vaccination guidance and AGREES to actively communicate with, and seek the views of their constituents on this issue
- NOTED developments in DIVA and other diagnostic and vaccine technologies
- AGREED that VEAG should provide advice to industry partners, government stakeholders, AHA and AHC on the size and composition of the future FMD antigen bank
- AGREED that VEAG should develop further policy guidance that includes:
 - likely timeframes to deploy vaccination
 - the management of vaccinated animals (including pros and cons of retaining vaccinated animals in the population, or allowing them to live out their productive lives)



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



- strategic use of vaccination
 - logistics of a vaccination campaign
 - design of proof of freedom surveillance strategies
 - methods to investigate the status of reactor animals
 - movement controls for vaccinated animals and their products
 - consideration of associated trade and market access issues
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- NOTED that VEAG's engagement with industry and government stakeholders will be ongoing in the development of the policy guidelines
 - NOTED progress under the overseas risk management project, involving the use of live FMD virus, and the ability to pose specific research questions to that project in the future.