

EIG Meeting 4 May 2006

ENGLAND IMPLEMENTATION GROUP 4 MAY 2006

Headline Thoughts

Overall much more engagement from the members of the Group at this meeting. Limited involvement with the public. However, there were fewer members of the public present. An interesting meeting covering a wide range of issues. Depending on future agenda items and time availability it would be useful for Branch members to attend EIG meetings as observers to gain an insight to the overarching policy initiatives in the animal health area.

Presentations

JIGWG Update (Stewart Houston)

Well received by the group with substantial amount of questions following the presentation. The following points were made:

- Insurance industry engagement still required
- Engagement of the processor/retail sector – if not to share costs must have some sort of responsibility sharing
- Consequential losses may/may not be included for the wider stakeholder group if no levy funds have been collected from this source
- Costs of welfare disposal arrangements should be included
- Need to consider costs of livestock keepers “locked up” by disease control measures
- Incentivisation of farm biosecurity
- Engagement with the Devolved Administrations
- Clear understanding of what industry and Government mean by the sharing of responsibility
- Need for ambition in responsibility sharing – Food Standards Agency was a good example of an innovative approach
- The future role of the Group following the consultation exercise
- Development of institutional arrangements will take time – Australian arrangements took six years
- Implementation arrangements/mechanisms were crucial to success and JIGWG needed to focus on the detail as well as the overall policy
- With budgetary pressures savings may be exacted on the costs associated with the control/eradication of endemic diseases so perhaps endemic diseases should be included in the remit of JIGWG

- Farm assurance could play an important role in creating incentives
- (Keith Meldrum) – UK border control was weaker than it was in the past (twenty years ago) and the Community was not as strong in animal health terms – accession of the new Member States. Farmers could not control many diseases e.g. fly-borne
- Devil was in the detail.
- The species coverage of the work of JIGWG
- Difficulties in the categorisation of disease¹
- Which diseases ought to be covered
- Whether endemic diseases were covered
- Pros and cons of *ex ante* and *ex poste* sharing of costs with some suggestion of a hybrid system like in the Netherlands

The chair of EIG requested that there should be a further presentation to the Group to update them on progress. Given the tight timescale for the work of JIGWG the Chair offered to write to Defra suggesting that more resources were made available to JIGWG. Stewart was grateful but thought in the short term (up to final meeting on 16 June) an increase in resource would not confer a significant advantage. EIG was content with the direction of travel of JIGWG and acknowledged that a significant amount of work had been completed.

Community Animal Health Policy (CAHP)

A comprehensive introduction to the history and reasons for the development of the CAHP – a really useful insight to the community workings in the area of animal health policy. The process of the development of the CAHP was outlined and a separate presentation of the working of the evaluation team and its results was given.

Issues raised:

- Concerns about the lack of engagement with the “citizens”
- Poor responses from the UK on the questionnaire
- The need for effective communication from the Commission
- The recognition that this process (communication/engagement with public) was a new to the Commission and lessons were being learnt
- Difficulties with joining CAHP and welfare policies

¹ Eric Marin commented in discussion of the CAHP that categorisation of diseases was part of defining responsibilities but that it did not necessarily end there. For example, with FMD it might be possible to split 50:50 but have a different split for the costs of the vaccine and vaccination programme.

- The problems associated with engaging all Member States and not making policies too difficult to achieve for the newest or too basic for the established members
- Recognition that the outcomes of this process would not be achieved over-night and that this would actually take, in some instances, decades to achieve
- Acknowledgement that the UK AHWS was held in high regard in the Commission and that this was a starting point for their work
- Alignment of the OIE and EU policies
- Problems associated with the development of pan-European databases to hold information on animal health
- Problems associated with the plethora of regulations and their harmonisation into a simple(r) set

Following the presentations there was a discussion on the “Status of Animal Health and Welfare Livestock Indicators” led by Stuart Platt. These covered various aspirations and visions of the EIG and the progress that had been achieved or work that needed to be done – represented by a RAG system. Surprisingly, there appeared to be a significant number in the RED category and worryingly the over-arching indicator of “Partnership working”.

All papers are available on the EIG web site at the following address: <http://defraweb/animalh/ahws/eig/minsagendas.htm> (there are hard copies available in the Team).

**JIGWG Secretariat
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