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12 July 2006

Joint (Industry/Government) Working Group Report on Sharing Responsibilities and Costs of Exotic Animal Disease

Dear Addressee

The Joint (Industry/Government) Working Group was established in December 2005 with a remit to work in partnership in making recommendations to government and industry on sharing responsibilities and costs of exotic animal disease. We enclose a copy of our report.

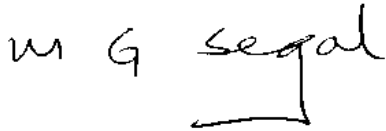
In our view, the overriding objective for sharing responsibility and costs between industry and government must be to achieve better management of animal disease risks so that the overall risks and costs are reduced. The report recommends how a new relationship between government and industry can be forged to reduce animal disease risk. Partnership working, responsibility sharing and sharing costs are at the heart of the proposals in our report.

The report represents a 'work in progress' and we have highlighted in the report specific areas of detail where we consider that further work needs to be undertaken before final conclusions can be reached. However, the report represents a major step forward.

We understand that following consultation on this report, the government will publish its proposals as to how sharing responsibilities and costs can be taken forward. This will be subject to further consultation and in light of responses received the government will then come forward with draft legislation. We understand that Ministers are hoping to publish a draft Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny in the Spring of next year with a view to introduction in the 2007-2008 session of Parliament. We expect that the livestock industry will be fully involved at all these stages.

It is worth adding that our Working Group has also been engaged in influencing the discussion at a European level. The Commission is seeking to introduce cost-sharing arrangements between government and the livestock sectors at Member State level. DG SANCO (the lead directorate) has been particularly attracted to the partnership approach that we are working to adopt and wants to learn from our experience.

In this report we have set out our ideas on how to achieve a new approach to secure better policy making and lower animal disease risk. We believe it will be a valuable contribution in the development of policy in this area, and put into practice the agreed principle of a partnership between industry and government.



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