The BSE Inquiry Terms of Reference

To establish and review the history of the emergence and identification of BSE and new variant CJD in the United Kingdom, and of the action taken in response to it up to 20 March 1996; to reach conclusions on the adequacy of that response, taking into account the state of knowledge at the time; and to report on these matters to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Health and the Secretaries of State for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Members of the Committee

Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, Master of the Rolls
Mrs June Bridgeman CB
Professor Malcolm Ferguson-Smith MBChB, FRCPath, FRCP(Glasg.), FMedSci, FRSE, FRS

The Volumes of the Report

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2 Science
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4 The Southwood Working Party, 1988–89
5 Animal Health, 1989–96
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A note on the footnotes

During the course of its deliberations, the BSE Inquiry published many thousands of documents, along with transcripts of its oral hearings. These formed the evidence on which the Inquiry based its chronological accounts, discussions and conclusions. When footnotes refer to these sources, they are coded according to the Inquiry’s filing system, which can be consulted by the public in two ways:

- either through the Public Record Office, which has a copy of all the evidence in electronic form on a series of CD-ROMs; or
- on the BSE website (www.bseinquiry.gov.uk).

YB codes: eg, YB88/12.22/4.1

YB refers to Year Books. These are documents collected in chronological order, year by year. They come from a variety of sources, but many of them are letters, memoranda and minutes of departmental meetings. For example, the one mentioned above refers to a document dated 22 December 1988 (YB88/12.22), which is the fourth document filed for that day and, specifically, its first page (4.1).

S codes (written witness statements): eg, S387 Tomlinson para. 6

A witness statement is written evidence supplied to the Inquiry. In the example above, the ‘S’ classifies the evidence as a witness statement, and it is number 387, paragraph 6. ‘Tomlinson’ shows that it was written by Sir Bernard Tomlinson. When people have sent in more than one witness statement, these statements are classified S387, S387A, etc.

T codes (transcripts of oral hearings): eg, T40 pp. 121–2

A number of witnesses gave oral evidence to the Inquiry, and the ‘T’ references indicate transcripts of the relevant hearings. The example above refers to day 40 of the oral hearings, pages 121–2.

IBD codes: eg, IBD1 tab 2 para. 5.3.5

These are Initial Background Documents – a selection of published material that was supplied by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food at the start of the Inquiry. The example refers to the first file, or ‘bundle’, of such background documents, and to the second document in that bundle. In this case, it is the Report of the Southwood Working Party on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, paragraph 5.3.5.

M codes: eg, M29 tab 3

These are further bulky documents from a variety of sources (‘M’ stands for ‘Materials’). They have been filed in series of bundles in the same way as the Initial Background Documents and the other series of bundles described below.

L codes: eg, L3 tab 6

These refer to legislation (ie, Statutory Instruments – Regulations, Orders, etc – and Acts), which is generally available in published form. For convenience the legislation most frequently referred to at hearings was filed in a series of L bundles.

DM codes: eg, DM01

Documents from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF)
DH codes: eg, DH01
Documents from the Department of Health

DW codes: eg, DW01
Documents from the Welsh Office

DS codes: eg, DS01
Documents from the Scottish Office

DN codes: eg, DN01
Documents from Northern Ireland Departments

DO codes: eg, DO01
Documents from other Departments

SEAC codes: eg, SEAC1
Documents relating to the Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee

FEG codes: eg, FEG1
Documents relating to the Lamming Committee (the Expert Group on Animal Feedingstuffs)

Tyrrell codes: eg, Tyrrell1
Documents relating to the Consultative Committee on Research into Spongiform Encephalopathies chaired by Dr David Tyrrell