

**Open Government
Status:

Open**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS PATHOGENS
FOR INFORMATION

**Guidance on a common set of containment measures to apply to both
animal and human pathogens – a Callaghan review recommendation**

Issue

1. Members of the ACDP will recall that Sir Bill Callaghan conducted a review of the regulatory framework for handling animal pathogens, following the Foot and Mouth disease outbreak in Surrey in August and September 2007. The Report was published in December. One of the recommendations in the report was that 'ACDP be tasked with formulating a common set of containment measures to apply to both animal and human pathogens'.

Background

2. Separate investigations into the biosecurity at the Pirbright facility for handling foot and mouth virus were undertaken by HSE and a team led by Professor Brian Spratt. Their reports are available at:

- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/news/archive/07aug/finalreport.pdf>
- http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/fmd/investigations/pdf/spratt_final.pdf

3. In response to one of the recommendations in each of the reports, Hilary Benn, the Secretary of State for the Environment, asked Sir Bill Callaghan to lead a review of the regulatory framework for animal pathogens. The Callaghan report is available at:

- <http://www.defra.gov.uk/FootandMouth/investigations/bill-callaghan.htm>

4. Hilary Benn accepted all of the report's recommendations. Essentially, the key recommendations include:

- Responsibility for inspection and enforcement functions in respect of animal pathogens should move from Defra to a body that is not subject to a conflict of interest and which has access to the range of technical expertise needed to carry out the regulatory function fully;
- HSE should become the single regulatory body for both animal and human pathogens, implementing a single regulatory framework.
- ACDP should formulate a common set of containment measures applicable to both animal and human pathogens.

5. Work is now underway to implement the recommendations, and in accordance with the recommendations, is being carried out in three phases:

- Phase 1: Defra to formalise HSE support of SAPO inspections (by January 2008)
- Phase 2: Changes are made to SAPO to designate HSE as the inspection and enforcement body (by April 2008);
- Phase 3: Begin urgent work to bringing in a single regulatory framework (by end 2008)

Next steps

6. Defra and HSE have established a joint project board to oversee the delivery of the review's recommendations. Initial priority has been given to delivering Phases 1 and 2, but HSE and Defra are now working up options for how the single regulatory framework can be delivered. A common set of containment measures to apply to both animal and human pathogens will be a critical component of this phase. The project board is due to meet on 6 February. It will write to ACDP, through the Chair, with more information about how it sees the work going forward, and a suggested timetable.