



## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS PATHOGENS**

### **Secretariat Report for the 99<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ACDP, and matters arising from previous meetings**

1. This paper includes reports on progress made with matters arising from the last meeting, reports from ACDP Working Groups and other relevant advisory committees as well as other items that may be of interest to members.

#### **Matters Arising from the 98<sup>th</sup> meeting**

##### Viral haemorrhagic fever guidance

2. The VHF guidance was published in July 2012 and can be found at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/files/2012/07/FINAL-VHF-guidance-for-publication.pdf>.

#### **Reports from ACDP Working Groups**

##### Update on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs)

3. The ACDP Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Risk Management Subgroup (TSE RM SG; formerly TSE Working Group) has recently been restructured. The TSE RM SG provides ACDP as requested with practical, evidence-based advice on the management of risks from TSEs, in order to limit or reduce the risks of exposure to, or transmission of, TSEs, and to handle issues as referred, taking into account the work of other relevant bodies. Last year the Department of Health set up the TSE Risk Assessment Sub Group (TSE RA SG), the sister subgroup of the TSE RM SG, to provide scientifically-based assessment of risk from TSEs in relation to food safety, public and animal health issues. The new TSE RM SG will consider scientific assessments provided by the TSE RA SG. The restructured TSE RM SG has a core membership, comprising some members of ACDP and other invited experts; other specialist experts will be invited according to the topic under discussion. The new Chair of the TSE RM SG is Dr Roland Salmon, also a member of

ACDP. The next meeting of the TSE RM SG will be Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

4. An overview of the Department of Health's response to the public health challenge of TSEs in animals and humans, the current issues, and the key issues going forward are presented in the attached paper (ACDP/99/P4 Annex 1).

### **Other matters**

#### ACDP structure and appointments

5. From the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 ACDP, along with other similar committees, will change from an Advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (ANDPB) to a Departmental Expert Committee. As a result, the Terms of Reference (ToR) will change slightly. At present, the ToR are as follows: "To provide as requested independent scientific advice to the Health and Safety Executive, and to Ministers through the Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and their counterparts under devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, on all aspects of hazards and risks to workers and others from exposure to pathogens. In addition, to provide as requested independent scientific risk assessment advice on TSEs to Ministers through the Department of Health, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and their counterparts under devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and to the Food Standards Agency." The ToR will change slightly to the following: "To provide, as requested, independent scientific advice to the Health and Safety Executive, the Department of Health, the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and their counterparts under devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, on all aspects of hazards and risks from exposure to pathogens." The remainder will stay as before.
6. The terms of five current ACDP members will expire at the end of October 2012. As these members have all served the full 10 years on ACDP, they cannot be reappointed. The members are: Prof Colin Howard; Prof Will Irving; Dr Phil Minor; Mr Gordon Sutehall; Dr John Keddle. Due to pressures from key staff vacancies at DH, other appointments exercises and other priorities, the appointments exercise to replace these members has been postponed until 2013. Permission has been obtained to extend the appointments of the five

members who are due to leave the committee on 31 October 2012 for one further meeting (in February 2013). This has also been agreed by the members.

7. During the appointments exercise to be carried out in 2013, we are proposing to appoint new members to the following areas of expertise:
  - i. Clinical infection;
  - ii. Virology;
  - iii. Laboratory biosafety.

Possible additional areas of expertise include infection prevention and control, industry, and the NHS. It is not yet certain whether employer and employee representatives need to be recruited as ACDP will be an expert committee of DH; this is currently being investigated by HSE. Other experts will be co-opted as and when required according to the topics under discussion.

#### Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome

8. An update on Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome in Yosemite National Park, California, USA is provided in the attached paper (ACDP/99/P4 Annex 2).

#### Approved List of Biological Agents

9. HSE has recently consulted on the new 2012 edition of the Approved List of biological agents. The consultation ran from 31 August to 28 September and sought the views of those dutyholders who use the list in contained use facilities. The consultation was sent to 200 stakeholders covering universities and research facilities, healthcare and government. HSE has received a number of responses which we will collate and provide feedback at the October ACDP meeting.

**Secretariat**  
**October 2012**