

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DANGEROUS PATHOGENS

Secretariat Report for the 72nd meeting of the ACDP, and matters arising from the 71st meeting

1. This paper includes reports on progress made with matters arising from the last meeting that are not covered elsewhere on the agenda, reports from ACDP Working Groups and other relevant advisory committees, and other items that may be of interest to members.

ACDP Biological Agents Forward Look to HSC

2. A copy of the final version of the Forward Look that was sent to HSC, under cover of Prof. Roger Whittenbury's letter of 22 January 2003, is attached for information at ➡[Annex 1](#)◀. HSC's Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification (ACGM) has carried out a similar Horizon Scanning exercise. A copy of that document has been included with the papers for information for this meeting. Both Forward Looks are confidential to members and their immediate colleagues on a need-to-know basis at this stage.

Biological Agents Bulletin

3. The fifth issue has been published on the HSE and DH websites, and emailed electronically as a clickable URL to those who have requested it. Issue no.6 is finalised and awaits publication. It includes features on Simian Herpes B, new COSHH, changes to Notification arrangements, and the Approved List of Biological Agents. The Secretariat invites your ideas and contributions on a continuing basis to future editions. A seventh issue is planned for late 2003.

Dog and Cat surveillance for exotic diseases

4. The PETS Working Group and the veterinary profession have expressed concern over the possible risk of introducing exotic disease with dogs and cats entering the UK. Some of these diseases are also Zoonoses. In order to assess whether there is such a risk Defra is establishing a Dog and Cat Exotic Disease Surveillance Scheme. This is being done in conjunction with the British Veterinary Association and the British Small Animal Veterinary Association. The scheme will rely on the voluntary reporting, by the veterinary surgeon, of suspect or confirmed cases of exotic diseases in dogs and cats (see ➡[Annex 2](#)◀). It is intended that this

will be a pilot scheme. After an appropriate period (probably 6 months) the scheme will be reviewed to decide whether it should continue and if so, in what form.

Reports from ACDP Working Groups

ACDP/SEAC TSE Joint Working Group (JWG) and progress on review of ACDP/SEAC TSE Guidance

5.1 Members received, in the Secretariat Report for the last meeting, a report of proceedings at the meeting of the TSE Joint Working Group (JWG) held on 23 October 2002. A copy of the full minutes of that meeting is now attached at ➡Annex 3← for members' interest.

5.2 The sub-group of the TSE JWG reviewing and revising the guidance "TSEs: Safe working and the prevention of infection" (The TSE Guidance) met on 16 December 2002. A copy of the draft note of that meeting is attached at ➡Annex 4←. The main items discussed were scrutiny of revisions to Part 3 of the TSE Guidance, covered in detail under Item 5 of today's agenda, further revisions to Part 4, and consideration of an Annex on "Decontamination and Waste Disposal". The next TSE JWG sub-group meeting is on 15 May 2003.

5.3 The "Decontamination and Waste Disposal" Annex was considered further at the TSE JWG meeting of 5 March 2003. They also accepted a proposal, made at ACDP's instigation, to review the BSE occupational guidance. Minutes of that meeting will be included with the papers for the next ACDP meeting. A further meeting of the JWG is scheduled for 8 July 2003.

Pets Travel Scheme (PETS) Working Group

6. Members were updated at the last meeting, *via* the Secretariat Report, on the current position with regard to the PETS. New EU proposals for the harmonisation of rabies controls are expected to be introduced in 2004. The UK's current arrangements will apply for the next 5 years and then be reviewed. A further meeting of the PETS Working Group may need to be convened, in due course, to consider those animals, other than cats and dogs, that could present risks of importing exotic diseases into the UK in the event of the PETS being extended to other animals or from those animals covered by the new EU proposals.

Categorisation Working Group

7. The Working Group met on 11 December 2002 for its 6th meeting. They considered a further draft of the new main ACDP guidance 'Biological Agents – Managing The Risks', that is replacing the existing ACDP Categorisation

Guidance. A copy of the draft minutes of that meeting is at ►[Annex 5](#)◄. The next meeting of the WG will be held on 28 May 2003.

Poliovirus Working Group

8. This Working Group last met on 29 November 2002. A copy of the note of the meeting is attached at ►[Annex 6](#)◄ for members' information. The European Region was certified polio-free in June 2002. Colleagues in DH are pursuing the issues of changes to laboratory Containment Levels (CLs) for poliovirus *via* the EU. This issue will be brought back to ACDP in due course.

Reports from other Advisory Committees & Groups

Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC)

9.1 Meetings of SEAC were held on 11 September 2002 and 14 November 2002. Draft minutes of the open sessions of both meetings are attached at ►[Annex 7](#)◄ and ►[Annex 8](#)◄. A report of the most relevant item to ACDP that was considered at the closed session in November – revision of the TSE Guidance – was provided with the papers for the December ACDP meeting. An update on progress made with revision of the guidance since then will be covered under Agenda item 5 at the ACDP meeting today.

9.2 SEAC last met on 11 February 2003. The agenda and other matters relating to SEAC are available for viewing on their website (www.seac.gov.uk). Future meetings of SEAC in 2003 are planned for 30 April, 24 June, and 24 September.

Expert Advisory Group on AIDS (EAGA)

10. The meeting of EAGA scheduled for 26 November 2002 was cancelled due to the pressures of other work. The public summary of the following meeting that was held on 14 March 2003 will be included with papers for the next meeting of ACDP. The public summary of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2002 is attached now at ►[Annex 9](#)◄.

UK Zoonoses Group (UKZG)

11. A note of the main items discussed at the 18 October 2002 meeting of UKZG was included in the Secretariat Report for the December ACDP meeting. Full draft minutes of that meeting are now attached at ►[Annex 10](#)◄, for members' information. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 23 April 2003. The recent human case of EBL2 infection following exposure to a bat bite, the West Nile Virus contingency plan and the outcome of the VLA/PHLS collaboration in preparing a framework document on possible risks to human health from Post-Weaning Multi-Systemic Wasting Syndrome (PMWS) are among the items expected to be on the agenda.

Future meetings of ACDP in 2003

12. The meetings scheduled are as follows:

Tuesday 10 June 2003

Health and Safety Executive, Globe Room, Rose Court

Tuesday 16 September 2003

Department of Health, Room 136B/137B Skipton House

Tuesday 9 December 2003

Health and Safety Executive, Globe Room, Rose Court

Secretariat

March 2003

➡ ACDP/72/P4 Annexes 1-10

This material has been removed under Exemption 2 (policy analysis and deliberation) & Exemption 10 (intention to publish) ←