



**ADOPTED MINUTES OF 2ND PLENARY MEETING OF THE PANEL
ON ANIMAL HEALTH AND ANIMAL WELFARE
(30/09/2003 AFTERNOON SESSION AND 1/10/2003)**

AGENDA

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ CONFIDENTIALITY/ INDEPENDENCE.....	2
1.1. INTRODUCTION OF AHAW PANEL MEMBERS.....	2
2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AHAW/03-021)	2
3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETING (AHAW/03-009).....	2
3.1. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND PUBLICATION ON INTERNET	2
3.2. AGENDA FOR THE PLENARY MEETINGS IN 2003 AND 2004 (AHAW/03-020)	2
4. PROPOSAL OF THE PANEL WORKING PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTION OF OPINIONS	2
4.1. TRANSPORT	3
4.2. STUNNING.....	3
4.3. LAYING HENS MANDATE.....	4
4.4. PIGLET CASTRATION	4
4.5. STATE OF PLAY OF TUBERCULOSIS	4
4.6. NEW MANDATE.....	5
5. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED ON AHAW PANEL.....	5
6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.....	6

PARTICIPANTS

Harry J. Blokhuis, Donald M. Broom, Stefano Cinotti, Michael Gunn, Joerg Hartung, Per Have, Xavier Manteca Vilanova, David B. Morton, Dirk Udo Pfeiffer, Michel Pepin, Ronald John Roberts, José Manuel Sánchez-Vizcaino, James Michael Sharp Alejandro Schudel, Georgios Theodoropoulos, Philippe Vannier, Marina Verga, Martin Wierup.

EFSA: J. Ferres, J. Serratos (Scientific co-ordination AHAW panel), S. Mateljan (administration AHAW panel).

European Commission: S. Osaer (SANCO D5), R. Horgan, F. Reviriego (SANCO E 2)

APOLOGIES

I. Capua, R. Dantzer, M. Gunn (1st October) and D. Broom (1st October afternoon).

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/ CONFIDENTIALITY/ INDEPENDENCE

The Chairman welcomed the participants and no member declared an interest in any of the items on the agenda of this specific meeting.

1.1. Introduction of AHAW panel members

All participants briefly introduced themselves.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AHAW/03-021)

The commission (SANCO representative) asked to include a new mandate at the point 4.6. of the agenda for discussion. The agenda was adopted including such amendment.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLENARY MEETING (AHAW/03-009)

The minutes of the 1st Plenary Meeting were adopted with minor editorial changes.

3.1. Procedure for approval of minutes and publication on internet

The scientific coordinator proposed that minutes of the plenary meetings will be approved following the written procedure (e mail agreement), and should not take longer than four weeks after the plenary. The plenary agreed to follow such procedure since this meeting.

3.2. Agenda for the Plenary Meetings in 2003 and 2004 (ahaw/03-020)

The following dates were accepted for the next Plenary meetings: 9th December 2003 (Tuesday), and for 2004, 29-30 January (Thursday and Friday), 30-31st March (Tuesday and Wednesday), 15th June (Tuesday), 13th July (Tuesday), 14th September (Tuesday), 10th November (Wednesday) and 13-14th December (Monday-Tuesday).

4. PROPOSAL OF THE PANEL WORKING PROCEDURES FOR ADOPTION OF OPINIONS

The scientific co-ordinator explained to the Plenary the procedures for adoption followed at the former Scientific Committee (SCAHAW).

The Chairman presented for discussion a proposal for the Panel working procedures. The procedure should in any case comply with Commission Regulation 1304/2003/EEC. The following procedure was agreed:

1. The chairman receives the mandate. An integrated approach of the food chain is taken into account. The question is accepted or proposed to be modified in order to cover all aspects of the question: Animal Health, Animal Welfare and food safety (if any).

1.1. If the AHAW Panel needs support of another Panel, then contacts should be made on how is the best approach: If the question belongs to the remit of other Panels, the mandate should be addressed to the Scientific Committee.

2. The mandate (modified or not) is distributed for acceptance at the Plenary meeting or by written procedure. If any modification of the mandate is proposed, the Panel should provide a background for the modification. Only those mandates which are modified are sent to EFSA director for a final decision.

3. Once the final mandate is accepted the chairman and two vice chairmen are responsible to propose a chairman of a Working Group.

3.1. One multidisciplinary WG of AHAW experts chaired by one Panel member is organized. The profile of the members of the WG will be defined by the nature of the question.

3.2. Once the WG “finalised” the scientific report, all members formally accept that the scientific report will be published without the conclusions and recommendations on the internet.

4. The plenary receives the WG scientific report together with the drafted conclusions and recommendations. The scientific report is considered as basis for the discussion to establish the relevant conclusions and recommendations. The panel through the chairman of the WG proposes a scientific opinion based on the scientific report and any other relevant source of information.

4.1. The final opinion is published on Internet as the official “Panel” answer to the mandate, and the scientific report is published separately as a result of the mandate given from the Panel to the WG. Both documents (report and opinion) are published on Internet at the same time after adoption of the opinion by the Plenary.

4.1. Transport

Prof. Broom, Chairman of the Working Group on Transport, explained the contents of the opinion and several amendments were accepted. The conclusions were also discussed and amended. Prof. Broom will send to secretariat all amendments and editorial changes.

It was decided to draft a new version of chapter 3 concerning transport and diseases. A reduced number of Panel members will meet on 7th November to finalize the chapter 3, and also amend conclusions and recommendations. The final draft will be submitted for possible adoption at the next plenary meeting on 9th December 2003.

4.2. Stunning

Prof. H. Blokhuis, Chairman of the Working Group on Stunning, explained the current situation of the report on Stunning. It was informed that a new meeting will be held in Brussels the 8th October

to finalize the draft. Two members of the Panel were invited to assist at the Working group meeting. The final draft should be available for discussion at the next plenary meeting on 9th December.

4.3. Laying hens mandate

The current mandate was requested by the Commission services by the end of the first semester of 2004. One member of the Panel explained the difficulty to accept this mandate, knowing that a project dealing with the same terms of reference has been launched also by the Commission, with a deadline of 2 years (2006). The best qualified scientists belonging to different research institutes are engaged in that project. It was requested that a consultation should be made to the available scientists in order to ask them to provide an interim report by middle of 2004.

By May 2004 Member States are supposed to send their National reports to the Commission concerning the different housing systems as well as the results of their own research.

The mandate was proposed to be amended taking into account animal health and zoo-technical aspects and the impact of the different systems of rearing and housing for laying hens on egg and safety for the consumer. It was proposed a new chairman for this mandate. The chairman will look for experts as possible candidates to become members of a Working group, which could be the scientists involved in the research project with additional members from the Panel.

A letter will be sent to EFSA Executive director explaining the details of this amended mandate simultaneously with the terms of reference of the research project approved by the Commission, in order to check the possible conflict of interest and to recommend to postpone the deadline until the end of the first quarter 2005.

4.4. Piglet castration

The mandate was proposed to be amended taking into account animal health aspects and the impact of suppression of the castration on the organoleptic quality of the meat and the effects on the consumer. The proposal for this amendment will be send to the EFSA Executive Director for final approval. It was proposed a new chairman for this mandate. The chairman will look for experts as possible candidates to become members of a Working group. As soon as a list of experts will be drafted, and the new mandate is approved by EFSA the first meeting will be organized.

4.5. State of play of Tuberculosis

M. Sharp explained the state of play of the Tuberculosis opinion which is currently drafted at the Biohazards panel. The report is almost finalized and there are currently exchanges of amendments by e mail between experts. It was proposed that M. Sharp would write to the Bio-Hazards chairman to offer consideration by the AHAW panel concerning amendments of the chapters referring to animal health and welfare, if necessary, before final adoption.

4.6. New mandate

The Commission presented a new mandate to the AHAW Panel concerning to the microclimate (temperature and ventilation) inside the vehicles during transport of animals. The opinions should be available in the first quarter of 2004. The mandate refers to cattle, sheep, goats, and porcine.

A chairman for this mandate was decided and a first meeting was agreed on 23rd October. The WG members will be the same as those who drafted the previous opinion in 1999, together with the current members of the WG on transport.

In case a draft opinion was available on the 7th November, the WG on Transport will discuss also the conclusions proposed by the WG on microclimate for the required species. It was agreed that, if possible, the current draft on transport affecting Poultry and other species will take also into consideration the aspects of microclimate on the transport.

5. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED ON AHAW PANEL

EFSA or the panels may draft technical reports or self mandates, but first need the approval of the Executive Director. For each proposal one head of mandate was designated, which is responsible to draft an appropriate background for each self mandate.

The Chairman explained to the Plenary the possible priorities identified within the scope of AHAW as discussed by some members in a WG meeting on the morning of September the 30th. The priorities were discussed in the plenary meeting and the following proposal was adopted:

5.1. Proposal for Scientific reviews. The proposed task should fulfil EFSA objectives in the framework of the activities of AHAW panel and give support to the managers in their decisions.

Task 1. Scientific review of new tools for eradication on the OIE list A and some B diseases. Strategies may change according to new knowledge, therefore could exist the need to regularly update the latest findings on new tools for eradication. Diseases to be reviewed:

CSF, FMD, AI, BT, ISA, Rabies, Rift Valley fever, African Horse sickness and from the B list Tuberculosis and Brucellosis.

The chairman and the scientific coordinator will check with OIE/WHO in order to avoid any overlapping of possible current tasks. A very close follow up of alerts should be necessary as well as Member states support in data and experts.

5.2. Self mandates for possible scientific opinions

General mandate about how to anticipate crisis in animal health area, taking into consideration:

Density, Movements of animals (transport live or dead animals) and structure of the production, (Bio-security measures), the scientific tools to qualify health status of a region or a herd (problems of imports) and on farm diagnostic (e.g. trichinellosis).

Multi-factorial diseases, impact of the different rearing systems (including organic farming), on their development and maintenance, focusing in respiratory disorders (fattening pigs and broilers).

The welfare of farmed fish in relation to management methods (Atlantic salmons).

Impact on AH and AW of the management systems of dairy cattle. This review should have two parts one on general views (state of the art) and second one focused on mastitis and foot and leg disorders.

Other priorities were secondarily been identified:

The welfare of turkeys, ducks and horses in relation to management methods and “green care farms”.

The problem is related to the lack of data, therefore research is still necessary. For the “green care farms” the risks are related with zoonoses, animal welfare and human safety.

5.3. Questions that have been treated at the Scientific Committee or belong to specific questions of other Panels and therefore the assistance of the AHAW would be required:

The welfare of laboratory animals in relation to housing conditions and experimental procedures. The refinement of procedures used on laboratory animals in order to improve animal welfare. This issue should be discussed with the new EFSA Technical director and the Scientific Committee.

Antibiotic resistance in animals & Anthelmintic resistance (GMO, Bio-hazards panel and SC).

The welfare of genetically modified animals. Much research activity has been devoted to transgenesis, in Laboratory and farm animals in particular. In order that the acceptability of any technique can be properly evaluated by governments and the general, there must be adequate information on the consequences for animal welfare of the modification. There has been no scientific report by the former SCAHAW on this very rapidly growing area. (GMO Panel).

Disease preventive methods needed as a replacement or complement to the use of antimicrobials in order to contain antimicrobial resistance .

Experts and members of the Panel will be proposed by the AHAW Chairman at the Scientific Committee plenary in order to joint WG when they start.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair suggested to include a new item in the agenda of the next plenary on the identification of emerging issues under the scope of the Panel.

It was agreed that in case that the Panel has vacancies for Members of this Panel the profile to be requested should be on Epidemiology and Bacteriology.

One member of the Plenary has offered to make a brief presentation on “Risk assessment” at the next plenary meeting.
