

Minutes of the 4th meeting of the Working Group on Avian influenza monitoring (art. 31)

Held on 23-24-25 August 2017 by WEB-conference

(Agreed on 04 September 2017)

Participants

- **Working Group Members:**

Ian Brown

Paolo Mulatti

Krzysztof Smietanka

Christoph Staubach

Preben Willeberg

- **Hearing Experts¹:**

Thijs Kuiken

- **EFSA:**

ALPHA: Chiara Fabris, Joana Morgado, Frank Verdonck, Gabriele Zancanaro

- **Others:**

ECDC: Cornelia Aldhoch

¹ As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director on the selection of external experts:
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the working group members invited for the present meeting.

For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADoI or the SDoI, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Scientific topic(s) for discussion⁴

The contributions to the draft scientific report provided by the WG experts were discussed in details and relevant modifications agreed. Comments were collected and circulated among the WG to guide the development of the relevant sections.

The new version of the draft scientific report was cross-checked with the relevant sections of the draft AI scientific opinion mainly regarding the non-wild bird entry pathways.

Consensus was found in the new revision of the draft report and relevant Conclusions and Recommendations were drafted, commented and agreed.

It was highlighted the need to meet MSs's representatives in order to discuss the limitations of the data collection and proposals for better standardising it for the next season. It was agreed to take the opportunity of the next AHAW network meeting for doing it.

5. Any Other Business - Project management

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencypolicy.pdf>

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00229>

Draft scientific report to be sent to peer-reviewers for feedback and for information to the MSs' representatives that provided the data.

Timelines for finalisation of the draft report and approval-publication processes were discussed and agreed.

6. Next meeting

This was the last WG meeting to address EFSA's question number: EFSA-Q-2017-00229.

Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) or Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI)

In the ADoI or in the SDoI filled for the present meeting, Prof. Ian Brown, declared the following interest: he has involvement in risk assessment activities at national level; Dr. Paolo Mulatti declared the following interest: he has involvement in risk assessment activities at national level; Dr. Krzysztof Smietanka declared the following interest: he has involvement in risk assessment activities at national level; Dr. Christoph Staubach declared the following interest: he has involvement in risk assessment activities at national level. In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes⁵ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest⁶, and taking into account the specific matters discussed at the meeting in question, a waiver was granted.

Therefore the concerned experts shall be allowed to take part in the discussions and in the drafting phase of the EFSA Scientific report on Avian influenza monitoring October 2016 – August 2017.

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014>

Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Working Group on Avian influenza monitoring (art. 31)

Held on 06-07 July 2017, Parma (Italy)

(Agreed on 24 July 2017)

Participants

- **Working Group Members:**

Ian Brown

Paolo Mulatti

Krzysztof Smietanka

Christoph Staubach

Preben Willeberg

- **Hearing Experts¹/Member States representatives:**

Olivia Bessi (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Pernille Dahl Nielsen (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Adeline Huneau Salaun (on 06/06 p.m. and 07/07 a.m., for items: a) discussion of AI secondary spread and b) discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Aleksandra Miteva (on 06/06 p.m. and 07/07 a.m., for items: a) discussion of AI secondary spread and b) discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Sokratis Perdikaris (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Helen Roberts (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Eoin Ryan (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

¹ As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director on the selection of external experts: <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>.

Marcel Spierenburg (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Claudiu Stroe (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

Alexandru Supeanu (via WEB meeting on 07/07 a.m., for item: discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results – ToR3)

- **EFSA:**

ALPHA: Chiara Fabris, Frank Verdonck, Gabriele Zancanaro

- **Others:**

ECDC: Cornelia Aldhoch

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the working group members invited for the present meeting.

For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADoI or the SDoI, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Scientific topic(s) for discussion⁴

4.1. Discussion of the contributions to the draft Scientific report

The contributions to the draft scientific report produced by the WG members have been discussed in details and relevant modifications agreed. Comments to the contributions have been collected and circulated among the WG members to guide the development of the relevant sections.

For Interpretation of the terms of reference, it was agreed to include and highlight the limitations of the data that have been collected; recommendations on how data gaps could be improved were also discussed among the WG.

For Data and Methodologies, it was agreed to better explain which data are coming from ADNS and which are the additional data that have been requested to MSs (epi data collection). Data and information (on prevention and control measures and on secondary spread) that have been requested to MSs should also be described and detailed. It was

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³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00229>

agreed to include the “Data-dictionary” of the epi data collection as Annex to the Scientific Report. The timeline of the data collection will also be better specified (i.e., from October 2016 to August 2017 for the ADNS data, and to April 2017 for the epidemiological data).

For ToRs -1 and -2, it was agreed that the phenotypic characterisation of AI viruses circulating in the EU should include H5N5, H5N6 and H5N8; differences to Asian viruses should also be mentioned.

The representations (maps, tables and epidemic curves) of AI poultry and captive birds’ outbreaks and events in wild birds have been discussed in details and agreed: a) one map for LPAI and a series of maps on a monthly basis for HPAI will be produced, b) due to the different interpretations across MSs, no discrimination of poultry/captive birds and commercial/non-commercial will be reported on the maps.

With regard to the epidemic curve HPAI in domestic birds, it was agreed to: a) describe the lack of denominator data (i.e. the negative cases) and the problems it brings for the interpretation of the data, b) describe the method of surveillance that was used, in particular in wild birds, c) emphasise the main data gaps (e.g. the fact that many birds were not determined at species level).

A detailed list of HPAI-positive wild bird species will be also included.

For ToR-4, the WG experts agreed to list the species in 4 categories: gallinaceous poultry, domestic waterfowl, wild waterfowl, other wild birds (e.g. sparrow, pigeons).

It was agreed to start the section with a summary of the virological data and to have an overarching section to describe the risks for the different viruses (H7N9, H5N1, H5N6, H9N2, H5N8) to come to the EU, which should address the following aspects: a) the dynamically evolving epi situation, b) the high uncertainty on the epidemiological situation (and large uncertainty on surveillance, even in countries closer to EU), c) the possible multiple pathways for spread of the viruses, e.g.: trade (in particular for HPAI), wild bird involvement, human activities, d) the genetically evolution of the virus in a short time period, e) the illegal movements of captive birds (in particular of passerines) as viable pathway for spread of H7N9, H5N6.

4.1.1. Detailed discussion of the results from data collections and case reports

An overview of the data collection was presented.

For the characterisation of the affected poultry holdings (from October 2016 to April 2017), the WG discussed in detail which information and data will be important to be included in the descriptive analysis. In particular, it was agreed that: a) the analysis should be limited to HPAI,

b) zoo birds should be included and kept separated in the analysis, whereas captive birds and poultry will be considered together, c) all N-types will be considered and detailed analysis will be done only for H5 viruses (which will be aggregated).

It was discussed the importance of agreeing on which parameters were relevant to identify outbreaks (besides mortality) and referring to them at a holding level in the data analysis. It was agreed to insert tables to summarise the data when they are relevant (in the other cases the results of the analysis will be described in the text) and that, in the tables, only the poultry species (chicken, duck, hens, turkey) should be presented. It is also necessary to describe the limitations of the data that have been provided.

The WG also agreed to include a description of which data would be required for a spatial analysis of wild bird events and poultry/captive bird outbreaks.

An overview of the AI prevention and control measures applied by MSs, and the overall description of the submitted case reports were presented. It was agreed to indicate how many MSs (within the ones that submitted the case reports) took actions before the first AI case/event in their territories and to report the date of the first finding/event in a given MS; this would allow seeing how much time difference there was between first action and first case/event.

When MSs send the case reports updated according to the WG discussion, it would be important to include additional information regarding the "strengthening of biosecurity measures" in the overall description, e.g.: a) the criteria that have been used for the risk assessment, b) how the measures' implementation has been checked, c) the derogations that have been granted, and under which circumstances. More information on "preventive culling" should also be included in the report, together with a clear description of the differences with "pre-emptive culling".

4.2. Discussion of AI secondary spread

The descriptions of secondary spread occurred in France and Bulgaria were discussed in details with relevant MSs' representatives.

The WG discussed the key information that are reported and asked FR and BG representatives to furnish more details, e.g on: for France: a) to provide data showing that seropositive ducks can excrete virus, b) to clarify the N-types involved in the outbreaks (if data are available), c) to describe the recent cases in northern France and clarify the possible link with neighbour countries; for Bulgaria: a) to specify the activities of pre-movement testing, b) to report any evidence supporting the analysed risk factors.

4.3. Discussion of MSs' case reports and overall results (ToR-3)

A document with observations on the reports on AI prevention and control measures that were applied by MSs was prepared and discussed with relevant MSs' representatives. Specific observations for each MS were discussed and clarified. Additional details and information on "housing order", "preventive culling", "biosecurity", "zoning", "hunting" and "early detection" were discussed with all MSs', and representatives were requested to update the case reports accordingly.

MSs' representatives were also informed about the changes to the data collection that were proposed and agreed by the WG (e.g. to include zoo birds). If additional clarifications on the submitted data are needed EFSA will contact MSs' representatives on case-by-case basis.

5. Any Other Business

5.1. Project management

Timelines and deadlines of the project were discussed and agreed. Due to the summer break, deadlines for WG new contributions are: 31st of July and 21st of August.

Relevant MSs' Representatives will send updated case reports on prevention and control measures and on secondary spread by 10th of August.

5.2. Tasks and assignments

Specific tasks were assigned to the WG members.

6. Next meeting

August, 23-24-25th 2017 – Web-meeting.

Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) or Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI)

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Therefore the concerned experts shall be allowed to take part in the discussions and in the drafting phase of the EFSA Scientific report on Avian influenza monitoring October 2016 – August 2017.

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⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014>

Minutes of the 2st meeting of the Working Group on Avian influenza monitoring (art. 31)

Held on 14 June 2017 by WEB-conference

(Agreed on 21 June 2017)

Participants

- **Working Group Members:**

Ian Brown

Paolo Mulatti

Krzysztof Smietanka

Christoph Staubach

Preben Willeberg

- **Hearing Experts¹:**

Not Applicable

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Not Applicable

- **EFSA:**

ALPHA: Chiara Fabris, Frank Verdonck, Gabriele Zancanaro

- **Others:**

Not Applicable

¹ As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director on the selection of external experts:
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the working group members invited for the present meeting.

For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADoI or the SDoI, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Scientific topic(s) for discussion⁴

4.1. Discussion of the contributions to the draft Scientific report

The contributions to the draft scientific report produced by the WG members have been discussed in details and relevant modifications agreed. Comments to the contributions have been collected and will be circulated among the WG members to guide the development of the relevant sections.

For ToR -1 and -2, it was agreed that the description of HPAI/LPAI events/locations will: i) provide information on the situation in Europe only, and ii) due to the high amount of outbreaks (detected in poultry and captive birds) and events (detected in wild birds) from October 2016 to August 2017 (general description) and to April 2017 (analysis affected holdings), the data will be represented on a monthly basis. It was also emphasized the difficulty in interpretation of the geographical distribution of the wild bird events due to the absence of surveillance data.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencypolicy.pdf>

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00229>

With regard to epidemic curve HPAI in domestic birds, it was agreed to include an overall trend line and information on specific wild bird detection in time (e.g. tufted ducks and mute swans).

For listing the HPAI-positive wild bird species, it was agreed to: i) consider also previous HPAI H5 outbreaks (from 2005), ii) provide information on apparently healthy wild birds, and ii) include information from zoo birds, which can give details on clinical signs.

For ToR-3, it was agreed that an overall description of the case reports submitted by MSs should be included as Annexes to the EFSA Scientific report and the overall key points will be emphasised in the main text.

For ToR-4, the WG experts agreed to have an overarching section on “options for actions for EU preparedness” that can cover the different viruses that will be addressed. The sections that will address each specific virus should have similar structure and include the following aspects: i) background and epidemiology, ii) detections, iii) phenotypic characterisation, and iv) genetic characterisation.

It was also agreed to include a sections on HPAI H5N1 as this virus is present in the wild bird population and already came to the EU in the past. Also LPAI H9N2 will be included as it has the potential to cause significant damage to the European poultry sector would it arrive in the EU and this virus has been shown to be an important source of genes for reassorted HPAI viruses. These sections can be brief, referring to available update documents from other organisations and should focus on data from 2016-2017.

4.2. Discuss first results from the data collection on AI outbreaks (ToRs -1 and -2)

An overview of the state of the implementation of the data collection was presented: most MSs did submit their data. The WG discussed which information and data will be important to be included in the descriptive analysis. The risk managers indicated after the meeting that inclusion of data on the impact of the outbreaks is of interest (limiting to the affected holdings). The “mortality rate” is a difficult parameter to be interpreted; therefore its analysis is not requested.

4.3. Discussion of the case reports

An overview of the number of case reports received by the MSs was presented. It was agreed that an overall description of the case reports should be included in the EFSA Scientific report and the key points emphasised; representatives of the MSs that have submitted the case reports will be invited to the next WG meeting in order to discuss the key points and provide clarifications.

The WG agreed on the importance to collect epidemiological information also on secondary spread, therefore MSs that have had a relevant number of secondary outbreaks (i.e. BG, FR and HU) will be asked to write “case reports on secondary spread” in their countries.

The WG discussed the key information that would be important to collect from the secondary spread and agreed to have a description, supported as much as possible by evidence, on the: i) key risk factors for spread within a flock (including force feeding device), ii) modality of the detection of the secondary outbreaks, iii) description of the production sector(s)/system(s) involved, iv) serology in ducks in relation to the presence of clinical signs, v) breed and age of the ducks that were involved.

5. Any Other Business

5.1. Project management

Timelines and deadlines of the project were discussed and agreed.

5.2. Tasks and assignments

Specific tasks were assigned to the WG members.

6. Next meeting

July, 06-07th 2017 – physical in Parma (IT)

Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) or Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI)

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Therefore the concerned experts shall be allowed to take part in the discussions and in the drafting phase of the EFSA Scientific report on Avian influenza monitoring October 2016 – August 2017.

⁵ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014>

Minutes of the 1st meeting of the Working Group on Avian Influenza monitoring (Art. 31)

Held on 19 May 2017 by WEB-conference

(Agreed on 30 May 2017)

Participants

- **Working Group Members:**

Ian Brown

Krzysztof Smietanka

Christoph Staubach

Preben Willeberg

- **Hearing Experts¹:**

Not Applicable

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**

Not Applicable

- **EFSA:**

ALPHA: Chiara Fabris, Frank Verdonck, Gabriele Zancanaro

AMU: Federica Barrucci

- **Others:**

Not Applicable

¹ As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director on the selection of external experts:
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.
Apologies were received from Cornelia Adlhoch.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest³, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI) filled in by the working group members invited for the present meeting.

For further details on the outcome of the screening of the ADoI or the SDoI, please refer to Annex. Oral Declaration of Interest was asked at the beginning of the meeting and no additional interest was declared.

4. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

4.1. Presentation of the project, mandate and terms of reference (ToRs)⁴

The composition of the WG was explained. The roles of chair, members and coordinator were described. The ToRs and the approach to the mandate were discussed in details within the WG. The need to provide an interpretation of ToRs was highlighted particularly for ToR-3. The structure of the scientific report to address the mandate was defined and agreed.

4.2. Data on AI outbreaks (ToRs -1 and -2)

It was first specified that the data made available by the MSs to the WG can only be used to generate the scientific reports requested by the mandate.

An overview of the state of the implementation of the data collection was presented. The period of concern is October 2016 – August 2017.

² <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencypolicy.pdf>

³ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf>

⁴ <http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2017-00229>

The plan of analysis to address ToRs -1 and -2 was discussed and agreed. The degree of completeness of the data already received was presented and discussed.

In particular, on the basis of the data submitted in ADNS and from the MSs reports, the WG agreed that the following elements should be described:

- For LPAI: the events/location of positive domestic birds and the number of outbreaks per country for poultry and captive birds;
- for HPAI: the events/location of both positive domestic and wild birds, the number of HPAI outbreaks per country for poultry and captive birds, the epidemic curve in domestic birds, the list of HPAI-positive wild bird species, and the frequency of wild bird events.

A phylogenetic characterization of the circulating viruses will be included as well as a brief genetic characterization to explain how related or distant viruses were (of outbreaks within the EU and compared to other continents). A more detailed analysis of the holding characteristics will be done until April 2017. MSs with a significant number of secondary outbreaks will be contacted to provide information on contact analysis and epidemiological investigations that have been performed.

4.3. Case reports (ToR-3)

Due to the fact that it is unfeasible to carry out a standardised data collection on the prevention and control measures that have been implemented, the MSs will be asked to write 'case reports' on a voluntary basis.

The WG discussed the key information that would be important to collect from the case reports; it was agreed to collect information on the following prevention and control measures: i) increasing awareness, ii) release housing order, iii) repeal housing order, iv) strengthening biosecurity, v) implement regional stand still, vi) implement preventive culling, vii) implement derogations on restriction zone implementation after risk assessment and viii) implement hunting. The WG will make a descriptive overview of the information received from the MSs. Given the absence of control groups, an analysis of the effect of these measures is not possible.

4.4. ToR-4

Monitoring the AI situation in other continents will mainly focus on HPAI/LPAI H7N9 and HPAI H5N6. Additional virus types can be included (e.g. H5N1 and H9N2), if the WG would consider that relevant. The detection, phenotypic and genotypic characterization will be described. It was agreed to have a specific section on the situation in humans, independently from the AIV subtype, and to address the following topics: i) vaccines, ii) surveillance and public health control

measures in relation to EU, iii) diagnosis, iv) options for actions for EU preparedness, and v) assessment for the general public in the EU. The latter point should be based on ECDC assessment.

It was also agreed that verified data, e.g. OFFLU and Empress-I (for the human cases only the published data that refer to confirmed cases related to WHO numbers and Chinese CDC which can be included in ECDC line list), are the data sources to address ToR-4.

5. Any Other Business

5.1. Project management

Timelines and deadlines of the project were discussed and agreed.

5.2. Tasks and assignments

Specific tasks were assigned to the WG members.

6. Next meeting

June, 14th 2017 - Web-conference.

Annex

Interests and actions resulting from the screening of Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) or Specific Declarations of Interest (SDoI)

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⁶ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014>