



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
04- Veterinary Control Programmes

Doc. SANCO/4820/2009

**REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE FOR MONITORING
DISEASE ERADICATION IN THE MEMBER STATES
BRUSSELS, 13 February 2009**

**REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE (TF) FOR MONITORING
DISEASE ERADICATION IN THE MEMBER STATES
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Participants:

Representatives of Member States: AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, ES, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SE, SK, UK.

Private Experts:

- B. Garin Bastuji, FR (chairman of the sheep & goats Brucellosis sub-group).
- E. Stifter, IT (chairman of the bovine Brucellosis sub-group);
- M. Madsen, DK (chairman of the Salmonella sub-group);
- V. Palfi, HU (chairman of the Rabies sub-group);

Commission (SANCO 04):

- **J. Moynagh – Chairman**
- L. Vandenberghe
- T. Cirasa
- P. Demetriou
- S. Idei
- V. Piazza
- O. Zorko
- K. Kardinal

Commission (SANCO FVO)

- T. Held
- P. Veroeveren

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA): Jordi Serratosa

Agenda:

J. Moynagh welcomed the delegations and the private experts. The agenda was adopted (see detailed agenda-Annex I). No suggestions for new items were proposed by the delegations.

1. INFORMATION ON THE MEETING OF THE “SHEEP AND GOATS BRUCELLOSIS” SUB-GROUP OF THE TASK FORCE ON MONITORING ANIMAL DISEASE ERADICATION. ROME, ITALY, 23-24 APRIL 2008.

Dr. B. Garin Bastuji, FR (chairman of the sheep & goats Brucellosis sub-group) presented a summary of the implementation of the Italian sheep and goat brucellosis eradication programme and the conclusions and recommendation of the meeting held in Rome. At the

national level the epidemiological situation has improved with an increasing number of *Brucella melitensis* Officially Free (BmOF) regions in the Central and Northern parts of Italy. There was no information given to the group suggesting a steady progress at the southern regions of Campania, Calabria and Puglia.

In these regions, as well as in Sicily, a special program was put in place under the *Ordinanza Ministeriale 14-11-2006* with complementary measures to help control the disease.

Many regions of Italy have now reached officially free status, and some of them for several years with the accumulation of experience, as in Sardinia.

A good level of coverage of the programme, according with the data presented, was achieved in 2006 but it decreased in 2007 in several areas. The assessment of the epidemiological situation of distinct areas has been completed and this allows the definition of regionally-adapted strategies for brucellosis control and eradication.

The prevalence at flock level decreased in 2006 and maintained the same level in 2007, while incidence increased from 2006 to 2007.

Vaccination cover increased from 2005 to 2006, but the number of vaccinated animals decreased in 2007, while the rate of vaccinated flocks/ infected flocks increased. However, this indicator does not inform on the % of infected flocks that were vaccinated.

Compliance with the time intervals for the follow-up of infected flocks is improving but still higher than the requirements set in the legislation. It would be advisable to identify constraints in this respect and implement measures to speed up the follow-up of infected flocks.

No information was presented regarding the slaughter of infected animals and the extent of the application of stamping-out. Infected animals should be slaughtered as fast as possible in order to prevent spreading of disease. Stamping-out should be more frequently considered particularly when the within-flock infection rate is important.

No information was presented regarding the compliance with new regulations issued for the infected areas of Italy, regarding the permission of movements only to brucellosis free flocks Or the implement of a system for the management of transhumance and the use of common pastures according to the flock classification

The group maintained most recommendations proposed in 2005, which are regarded as minimum requirements for the Sicilian programme of brucellosis control and eradication. It is essential that a good coverage of the programme is maintained.

It is essential that that the programme is adapted to the epidemiological and production system situation and that mass vaccination is considered for the most infected areas.

The group recommended that Italy should vaccinate all replacement animals, not only in infected flocks but in all flocks of infected areas.

Cross-reactions should be considered a marginal problem, regarding the importance of a good and persistent vaccination coverage (at least for 10 years).

The group recommends the change from subcutaneous vaccination to conjunctival vaccination using full doses of Rev.1 vaccine, to avoid vaccine-induced serological reactions.

2. INFORMATION ON THE SHEEP AND GOATS BRUCELLOSIS SITUATION IN ITALY AS FOLLOW UP OF THE TF SUB GROUP.

The Italian delegation presented some data on the implementation of some of the recommendation made by the TF sub-group. In particular, a new database system "SANAN" was illustrated. That system is being implemented in order to get the information and monitor the number of controls effected in each herd, the level of prevalence inside the herd and to establish the best strategy of vaccination, as suggested by the Task Force. Transhumance will be controlled through electronic identification of animals and through national database (SANAN). In addition, a special vaccination plan to be implemented in Sicily was briefly mentioned.

3. INFORMATION ON THE MEETING OF THE "BOVINE BRUCELLOSIS" SUB-GROUP OF THE TASK FORCE ON MONITORING ANIMAL DISEASE ERADICATION. BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND (UK), 7-8 OCTOBER 2008.

Dr Ernst Stifter, IT (chairman of the Bovine Brucellosis sub-group) presented the summary of the implementation of the Northern Irish bovine brucellosis eradication programme and the conclusions and recommendation of the meeting held in Belfast.

The Bovine Brucellosis Task Force Subgroup acknowledges the important efforts made by the NI CA in order to improve the situation of the disease in NI. The Task Force was pleased to see efforts being made both in the programme and in the laboratory. In particular, the main recommendations made by the subgroup in 2002 were being fully implemented.

However while the situation clearly improved up to 2005, the incidence of disease has increased consistently since then. However, these outbreaks are generally clustered in a limited number of areas. This shows the efficiency of the detection strategy implemented. However, the initial source of infection remains in some cases unidentified, which highlights the difficulty in identifying sources of infection and emphasises the need for continuing intensive efforts.

The experts identified potential reasons for the ongoing epidemic:

- although a high percentage of confirmed infected herds were depopulated (84% in 2007 and 89% in 2008), leaving any infected herds (i.e. confirmed outbreaks) might result in latently infected carrier animals remaining in the field. It was recommended that infected herd should be depopulated as a rule. In truly exceptional circumstances a herd may not be depopulated, if subject to a thorough epidemiological investigation and the decision agreed at a senior level
- the group was concerned that the (relatively generous) compensation scheme could encourage fraud and might not encourage farmers to implement bio-security measures and should be revised.

In order to limit the spread of the disease from outbreaks and to prevent new outbreaks, awareness of breeders in terms of bio-security is essential. This could be improved through reinforcement of the awareness campaigns already in place and greater involvement of farmers and their associations.

While sheep and goats are not very sensitive to *B. abortus*, with usually no abortion, this species is receptive and could constitute a reservoir of infection. The potential existence of such a reservoir should be investigated.

4. INFORMATION ON THE BOVINE BRUCELLOSIS SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AS FOLLOW UP OF THE TF SUB GROUP.

The North Irish delegation presented some data on the implementation of the recommendations made by the TF sub-group. In particular, infected herds will be depopulated as a rule. In truly exceptional circumstances a herd may not be depopulated, if subject to a thorough epidemiological investigation and the decision agreed at a senior level.

The compensation scheme will be revised and, in order to limit the spread of the disease from outbreaks and to prevent new outbreaks, awareness of breeders in terms of bio-security will be improved through reinforcement of the awareness campaigns already in place and greater involvement of farmers and their associations.

5. INFORMATION ON THE MEETINGS OF THE "FOODBORNE ZONOSSES – SALMONELLOSIS" SUB-GROUP OF THE TASK FORCE ON MONITORING ANIMAL DISEASE HELD IN ITALY (PADOVA), 16-18 APRIL 2008 AND IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC (PRAGUE), 26-27 JUNE 2008.

M. Madsen, DK, (Chairman of the sub-group) presented the summary of the conclusions and recommendation of the two meetings explaining that those meetings were part of planned series of meetings examining the results of the implementation of national Salmonella control programmes in breeding flocks and in flocks of laying hens in the Member States. The aim was to share experiences, to identify common obstacles as regards the implementation of the control programmes and to identify areas where further work and solutions would be needed. During the meeting in Italy, the Salmonella control programmes implemented by Spain, Italy and Portugal were presented.

The main conclusions and recommendations were on biosecurity measures, the exchange of national experiences, compensation models, vaccination experiences, logistics and data reporting, cleaning-up infected premises, trade in day-old chicks, antibiotic treatment and hatchery monitoring.

During the meeting in Czech Republic, the Czech Salmonella control programmes implemented in breeding flocks and in laying hens of *Gallus gallus* were presented. Programmes have been operated since 2007 onwards in both breeders and layers. Vaccination is compulsory, compensation is paid for destruction or emergency slaughter of infected flocks and expenses are paid for cleaning and disinfection of premises following the slaughter of infected flocks.

The main recommendations focused on the fact that compensation alone does not stimulate farmers to improve bio-security on their farm to prevent re-infection of flocks. Therefore compensation could gradually be phased out of a control programme as the prevalence of infected flocks declines, so that farmers would be forced and more motivated to take responsibility to duly execute the programme, especially regarding cleaning and disinfection. The test results of analysis of samples taken in the framework of official sampling found roughly twice as many positive flocks as did operator sampling (own checks).

Increasing the randomization of random official samplings is considered as a feasible option to solve this problem.

It was noted that the Czech competent authority developed a user-friendly web-based monitoring programme that could be shared with other Member states. As regard bio-security, it was recommended to use farm check lists to monitor improvement especially if a scoring system is implemented.

6. INFORMATION ON THE MEETING OF THE “RABIES” SUB-GROUP OF THE TASK FORCE ON MONITORING ANIMAL DISEASE ERADICATION. RIGA, LATVIA, 26-27 NOVEMBER 2008

V. Palfi, HU (chairman of the Rabies sub-group) presented the summary of the conclusions and recommendation of the meeting held in Latvia. At the meeting, representatives from Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and non EU-Members: Ukraine, the Russian Federation (Federal Services and Kaliningrad region) and Belarus were also present.

Due to the different epidemiological situation caused by being situated with borders with non-Member States, Latvia has to be prepared for a long lasting vaccination course.

Data showed that in the three Baltic Member States a considerable decrease of Rabies positive cases were seen in the last 2 years after launching the new strategy of OVF programme.

The subgroup noted that an excellent exchange of information with neighbouring MSs, e.g. Estonia and Lithuania, on the rabies situation and oral vaccination programmes implemented has been established. There are annual multilateral meetings. Also, attempts were made to establish similar co-operation with neighbouring third countries.

Considering the progress made in rabies eradication, the TF subgroup recommended to reduce the flight-line distance to achieve a more homogenous distribution of baits on the ground in the final stage of rabies elimination, to improve the existing national rabies data base by capturing more individual animal data to allow better epidemiological analysis.

In addition, the rabies routine laboratory diagnostic scheme should be harmonised according to international criteria and quality control of vaccine bait titres should be performed regularly before and during the distribution of vaccine baits in the field.

Follow-up of ORV campaigns should include sampling of animals after spring vaccination campaigns. Age should be determined to allow better analysis of both bait-uptake and sero-conversion in adults and young and was recommended to type rabies virus strains from vaccination areas to distinguish field from vaccine strains.

It was also recommended to target surveillance more on those animals more likely to show rabies, eg found dead animals, than healthy hunted animals.

7. INFORMATION ON THE RABIES SITUATION IN LATVIA AS FOLLOW UP OF THE TF SUB GROUP.

E. Olsevskis from Latvia presented the current situation of rabies following the implementation of the recommendations made by the Task Force (TF) sub-group, focusing mainly on the problem encountered for the execution of vaccination campaigns in 2008 and on the control of efficiency of the oral vaccination campaigns.

Latvia has established a well defined rabies eradication program which started in 2005. Recently, a quality assurance system for aerial distribution has been established. Vaccination campaigns resulted in a considerable decrease of rabies cases in the last two years.

Annual vaccination of dogs and cats is mandatory.

Rabies surveillance and monitoring of oral vaccination campaigns is well organised. There is a good network of accredited regional veterinary diagnostic laboratories established.

Unfortunately, in 2008, contestation of the tendering outcome had a negative impact on the implementation of the oral rabies vaccination programme. As a result the spring vaccination campaign could not be conducted. Also, the autumn vaccination campaign will not be finished this year as planned and only parts of the country covered with vaccine baits. On a positive note, vaccine supplies had now been guaranteed for three years.

8. REALLOCATION 2009 (SANCO/4742/2009- ANNEX IV)

L. Vandenberghe explained that if the funding allocated is not spent in full during the financial exercise, then reallocating funding from programmes of Member States which are not using their full allocation to those that are exceeding it, is considered to be a tool to improve financial management. The re-allocation exercise will likely be repeated in 2009 optimising the use of the resources and solving individual problems as occurred in 2008.

The effectiveness of reallocation relies on accurate information being provided by the Member States in due course.

Repeated under-expenditure will likely result in a decrease in funds allocated to the programmes.

J. Moynagh reminded the meeting that a statement on that issue was made by our Deputy Director-General P. Testori Coggi during the Council CVO meeting held in Brussels on 11 February (see Annex IV- SANCO/4742/2009) and urged MSs to be as accurate and realistic as possible in the future.

9. ON-LINE SYSTEM: SUBMISSION OF PROGRAMMES AND REPORT RESULTS. PRELIMINARY PRESENTATION

S. Morello, Unit A4 (Informatics tools) gave a demonstration on work in progress to provide a web based interface for submitting programme applications and making claims for payment. The interface presents as a PDF document which can be completed with the necessary information that the MSs has to provide when making application for programme approval or payment.

The PDF document for programme applications is based on the Annexes to Decision 2008/425/EC laying down standard requirements for the submission by MSs of national programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of certain animal diseases and zoonosis for Community financing.

This is expected to be available in the near future and Member States will be kept informed of progress.

A similar PDF forms, based on the Annexes to decision 2009/940/EC laying down standard reporting requirements for national programmes for the eradication, control and monitoring of certain animal diseases and zoonosis co-financed by the Community, will also be available in the near future.

10. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION ON DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT ON BRUCELLOSIS (SANCO/4053/2009).

V. Piazza briefly presented this document. The objective is to provide a summary on the eradication of Brucellosis, based largely on the conclusions and recommendations made by the experts of the two TF Brucellosis subgroups as the result of meetings held in the different Member States (MSs).

The purpose of this document is:

- to review the general principles that constitute the basis for strategic planning for surveillance, control and eradication of brucellosis
- to propose short/medium/long term measures based on specific epidemiological situation in order to accelerate the progress of eradication programmes
- to draw conclusions on perspectives on eradication/control
- to stimulate discussion on future strategy

The proposed measures must be explored and assessed based on the individual situation in each Member State (MS) or region running an eradication programme for bovine and/or sheep and goats Brucellosis, especially in those still having significant disease prevalence.

The large number of meetings held by the two TF sub-groups and the important outcomes reflecting the different epidemiological situations in the various MSs visited, give the opportunity to design/update new strategies more adapted to the heterogeneous situation of the MSs that are implementing eradication programmes as well as for MSs or third countries that still do not have a programme in place or that have to carry out control/surveillance.

11. PRIORITIES FOR 2010 AND TIMING: WD SANCO/4206/2009

V. Piazza presented working document SANCO/4206/2009 on priorities for 2010 and timing and explained in detail the document focusing mainly on recommending to MSs on the timetable for submission, evaluation and approval of eradication, control and monitoring programmes. (see Annex II)

12. WORK PROGRAMME 2009 (WD SANCO/4208/2009)

V. Piazza presented a preliminary proposal for the work programme for 2009; working document SANCO/4208/2008. Further contact with certain delegations that are asked to organise certain sub-groups needed in order to agree an appropriate dates. (see Annex III).

A new Task Force subgroup on Classical swine fever has been created and O. Zorko presented the Chairman of the group Prof. Dr Volker Moennig and its activities for 2009.

ANNEX I

Plenary meeting of the TASK FORCE for monitoring disease eradication in the Member States

(Agenda: 13 February 2009)

1. Reports of the subgroups

- S&G B: Italy (Chairman)
- B B: UK (NI) (Chairman);
- Salmonella: IT and CZ (Chairman)
- Rabie: Latvia (Chairman)

2. Short presentation measures/situation as follow up of the subgroups TF on S&G B, BB and update on the rabies situation with our neighbours

3. Preliminary information) on draft working document SANCO/4053/2008 on Brucellosis

4. On-line system: submission of programmes and report results: preliminary presentation (A4)

5. WD SANCO/4206/2009: info priorities for 2010 and timetable

6. WD SANCO/4208/2009: Task Force working plan 2009 (presentation of the new CSF TF sub-group).

7. Re-shuffling 2009 (SANCO/4742/2009)

8. Miscellaneous

ANNEX II



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Unit 04 – Veterinary Control Programmes

Brussels
SANCO/4206/2009

Animal disease eradication, control and monitoring programmes

Priorities for 2010 and timing

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to outline the steps which will be followed when considering the programmes submitted by Member States (MS) for co-financing by the European Commission in the context of Council Decision 90/424/EEC, as last amended by Council Decision 2006/965/EC¹.

The individual approval of the programmes follows a well-defined timetable according to the Council Decision 90/424/EEC (annex).

An overall budgetary increase on the programmes for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases is foreseen for 2010, in particular as regard Bluetongue and Salmonella.

1.1. Submission and approval of the programmes

Each programme has to fulfil the requirements (criteria) provided for by Commission Decision 2008/341/EC. Those criteria are specific for eradication programmes, monitoring/surveillance and control programmes.

The format to be used for the programmes to be submitted for 2010 is laid down in Commission Decision 2008/425/EC

Programmes presented after the **deadline of 30 April 2009** will not be taken into account for financing the following year (Article 24 (2) of Council Decision 90/424/EEC).

Unit SANCO 04 (Veterinary Control Programmes) is responsible for the veterinary and financial assessment and management of the programmes. The unit will consult within the Directorate-General and the reports from SANCO F (Food and Veterinary Office) will be also considered.

The Commission can ask for additional information from the Member State if a programme proposed for co-financing does not contain all the requested information or if certain technical and financial amendments are necessary. The period for gathering all the information regarding the programmes shall end on 15 September 2009 [Article 24 (4) of Council Decision 90/424/EEC].

1.2. Monitoring the progress of the current programmes (2009)

The Commission will monitor and evaluate the programmes based *inter alia* on the following information:

- The intermediate technical and financial report of the programme as foreseen by Article 24 (7) of Council Decision 90/424/EEC, to be presented by 31 July 2009 by the Member State (Article 3 of Commission Decision 2008/940/EC and Article 21(c) of Commission Decision 2008/897/EC (Decision approving the individual programmes));
- Information from the Member States presented in the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health;
- Final reports, in accordance with Article 24 (7)(b) of Council Decision 90/424/EEC by 30 April 2010, on the technical execution of the programme accompanied by justifying evidence as to the costs paid by the MS (Requested by Article 21(f) of Decision 2008/897/EC;

¹ OJ L 397, 19.12.2006, p. 22

- Final technical and financial report to be presented by 30.04.2009 on the execution of the 2008 programmes
- Reports based on on-the-spot inspections by the Food and Veterinary Office;
- Reports based on other on-the-spot inspections or audits;
- Reports based on the activity of the Task Force on monitoring animal disease eradication.

In order to maintain transparency, the Commission makes the approved programmes available on the SANCO website.

2. PRIORITY CRITERIA FOR ERADICATION CONTROL AND MONITORING PROGRAMMES OF ANIMAL DISEASES AND ZONOSES

2.1. In prioritising the programmes for the allocation of Community funding (see Annex 1) we are giving weight to diseases of public health importance and those that have major economic impact due to trade implications. We are also taking account of the need to ensure continuity and achieve progress as well as the interest of each programme for the Community and the volume of available appropriations. An example is represented by Bluetongue for which surveillance programmes in endemic or high risk area, due to the increased spread of the disease in the Community in 2007, will probably be necessary, including vaccination campaign.

Certain monitoring programmes are compulsory such as TSE monitoring and AI surveillance. It is also compulsory to submit multi-annual technical programmes for the control of zoonotic salmonella in certain animal populations; however the possibility for co-financing is furthermore based on annual submissions under 90/424/EEC by the Member States.

In addition, we recommend to submit multi-annual programmes for Rabies. For EBL and Aujeszky's disease 2010 is the last year for which Community co-financing is foreseen.

2.2. Community co-financing will not be granted for two particular situations:

- Programmes consisting of measures that are compulsory in Community legislation and not primarily aimed at eradication, such as those aimed at guaranteeing the health status of animals intended for trade.
- Programmes consisting of measures aimed at demonstrating the absence of a disease, aimed at obtaining the recognition of official freedom from the disease.

This approach is similar to that of recent years and is consistent with the approach to be outlined in the Communication on Community Animal Health Policy.

ANNEX

Timetable for submission, evaluation and approval of eradication, control and monitoring programmes of certain animal diseases and zoonoses

Procedure for the approval of programmes for 2010

30 APRIL 2009 *Submission of the programmes by the Member States. The format to be used for the programmes is laid down in Commission Decision*

The electronic version of the programmes should be submitted to the following electronic address:

SANCO-VET-PROG@ec.europa.eu

Please send one e-mail for each different programme indicating clearly in the subject the disease and the Member State or Acceding State.

No specific deadline: Request for additional information by Commission.

15 September 2009: End of the period for gathering information from MS.

October: Decision approving the programmes voted at SCOFCAH

30 November 2009: Adoption of the Decision approving the programmes.

Current programmes 2009

31 JULY 2009 **INTERMEDIATE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

First evaluation (technical and financial) of the programme by the Member States to be submitted to Commission. Commission Decision 2008/940/EC lays down standard reporting requirements for programmes of eradication and control of animal diseases co-financed by the Community

Quarterly (AI): report the positive and negative results of surveillance of poultry and wild birds through the Commission on-line system every three months by forwarding it within a period of four weeks following the end of the months covered by the report. EG: 1st quarter: from 1st January to 31 March 2008: report by 30 April 2009 etc.

Monthly (TSEs): technical reports on the progress of the programme (TSE monitoring only)

15 September 2009: Based on the information (both financial and technical [e.g. number of test performed, number of animals culled etc.]) on eligible measures to be taken by the end of the year) as well on the information of the intermediate report provided by the MSs, the Commission will probably proceed to the funding re-allocation with the aim of optimising the use of the resources and solving individual problems but taking into account the limitations as regards the number of transactions.

Programme 2008

30 APRIL 2009

Final report (technical and financial) from the Member State (Article 19 of Commission Decisions 2007/782/EC).

Commission Decision lays down standard reporting requirements for programmes of eradication and control of animal diseases co-financed by the Community (Commission Decision 2008/940/EC)

30 October 2009: The Commission decides on the funding and information are given to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health on the financial Decision taken.

Please, note that the documents (reports of the TF etc) and the legislation related to the programmes approved can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/diseases/eradication/legisl_en.htm

ANNEX III



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
 04 – Veterinary Control Programmes

SANCO/4208/2009

Working document

TASK FORCE for monitoring disease eradication in the Member States Working plan year 2009

Month	Bovine brucellosis S.G.	Sheep/goat brucellosis S.G.	Bovine tuberculosis	Rabies	Salmonella	Classical Swine fever
Feb	13 Plenary Task Force					
March					24-25 PL	
Apr						
May						
Jun	ES					DE
Sept						
Oct			12-13 PL	LT		
Nov	CY	CY?				
Dec						

ANNEX IV



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

04 - Veterinary control programmes

SANCO/4742/2009

Financial execution of the Eradication Programmes

A recent audit of the expenditure in the food and feed safety area and in particular of the eradication/surveillance programmes, determined that considerable sums remained unused each year because of inaccurate estimations of likely expenditure in the Member States. In addition, on-the-spot audits in the Member States frequently result in large corrections. The main issues that need attention are poor estimation of the financial outcome (resulting in funds being unused), valuation of animals, inclusion of non eligible expenditure (eg tests not covered by the programme), payment delays, lack of oversight of regions by central authorities.

For the setting of the annual contribution towards the programmes, there is the normal procedure and timetable as set out in Article 24 of Council Decision 90/424. Furthermore, in an attempt to maximise the use of funds we have carried out a reallocation exercise for each of the past five years. Member States are requested in the autumn to indicate the use of the budget that was made available and can ask for an increase or a reduction of the contribution decided in the previous year resulting in a further adjustment, theoretically closer to the reality of expenditure.

We recognise that the eradication costs of a disease are difficult to estimate. However, despite the reallocation exercise, considerable funds are underused every year. As this underuse is not discovered until the claims have been received i.e. after the year end, it has not been possible to consume them. Underuse occurred in almost all programme areas and was considerable for scrapie, salmonella and BSE eradication. The latter has now been amalgamated with TSE monitoring so this problem should not recur. The audit findings could in the longer term have negative consequences for the budget made available for the eradication/surveillance of diseases

We attach, for your information, detailed tables showing the consumption of funds for 2007, both on an original allocation basis, and also following the reallocation exercise. Unfortunately the reallocation exercise only improved the net use of funds by approximately 1 million Eur.

The applications for programmes 2010 (and claims for payment for 2008) are due by 30 April 2009. Member States are requested to carefully evaluate their 2010 programme applications to ensure that the programme elements and costs are realistic particularly compared with the outcome of previous years.

Better estimation will enable us to distribute funds to programmes which will fully consume them.