In response to information provided by the competent authority, any factual error noted in the draft report has been corrected; any clarification appears in the form of a footnote.
Executive Summary

This report describes the outcome of an audit carried out in Poland from 6 to 15 February 2018 as part of the published Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety audit programme.

The objective of the audit was to evaluate the actions taken by the Polish competent authority in order to control Salmonella, in particular the implementation of the Salmonella National Control Programmes in different poultry populations.

Subsequent to the latest previous audit (2015) and the Salmonella outbreak of 2016, the Polish competent authorities have made several changes to the Salmonella National Control Programmes, to relevant national legal instruments, and to instructions and official checks related to the Salmonella National Control Programmes.

Official controls in place respect (and sometimes exceed) the planned frequencies of on-site inspections, and detected and effectively imposed correction of food business operator non-compliances with requirements. Verification of the performance of official controls is in place and has also detected and obtained correction of shortcomings with the official checks.

The Salmonella National Control Programmes in Poland are generally in line with EU requirements and well implemented and correct restrictive measures were imposed and/or taken by farmers when needed and mostly well documented.

However, for laying hens in particular, the epidemiological investigations have frequently not managed to identify the source of infection and ECDC-EFSA data indicates that this infection is likely to still be ongoing in Poland. The CA has taken some steps to address this and, in particular, intends to establish dedicated epidemiological teams from 2018.

The implementation of the Salmonella National Control Programmes has achieved low Salmonella prevalence, in compliance with Union targets, for broilers and for breeding and fattening turkeys. Provisional data for the first semester of 2017 indicates that for breeding hens those targets may also be achieved but not for laying hens.

In 2016, the level of detection of salmonella in turkey fatteners and in broilers was approximately 100 times lower in food business operator sampling versus official sampling and for the 1st semester of 2017, for breeding chickens, there were 10 positive flocks with 9 of these detected only in official sampling which is much less frequent than food business operator sampling. The much lower rate of detection of food business operator sampling renders this element practically ineffective to detect Salmonella, which may be a reason that outbreaks still occur even when all other Salmonella National Control Programmes measures are correctly in place.

The report contains recommendations to the competent authorities to address the shortcomings identified.
Table of Contents

1 Introduction ....................................................................................................................................1
2 Objectives and scope ......................................................................................................................1
3 Legal Basis .....................................................................................................................................2
4 Background ....................................................................................................................................2
5 Findings and Conclusions .............................................................................................................3
  5.1 Preventive measures ................................................................................................................3
  5.2 Monitoring and sampling scheme ...........................................................................................6
    5.2.1 General points in relation to SNCPs ................................................................................3
    5.2.2 Laboratories .....................................................................................................................8
    5.2.3 SNCP for breeding flocks of Gallus gallus .....................................................................9
    5.2.4 SNCP for laying hens .....................................................................................................10
    5.2.5 SNCP for broilers ...........................................................................................................11
    5.2.6 SNCP for turkeys ............................................................................................................11
  5.3 Measures taken at time of suspicion and confirmation of Salmonella ..................................13
  5.4 Official controls, verification and audits ...............................................................................16
  5.5 Assessment of the progress and reviewing of the SNCPs .....................................................18
  5.6 Investigation of food-borne outbreaks (salmonellosis) and coordination .............................19
  5.7 Follow-up ..............................................................................................................................22
6 Overall Conclusions .....................................................................................................................23
7 Closing Meeting ...........................................................................................................................24
8 Recommendations ........................................................................................................................24
# Abbreviations and Definitions Used in this Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Competent Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVO</td>
<td>Chief Veterinary Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DG Health and Food Safety</td>
<td>Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVO</td>
<td>District Veterinary Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FBO</td>
<td>Food Business Operator</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRL</td>
<td>National Reference Laboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RASFF</td>
<td>Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>State Sanitary Inspection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNCP</td>
<td>Salmonella National Control Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Veterinary Inspection (<em>Inspekcja Weterynaryjna</em>)</td>
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</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

This audit took place in Poland from 6 to 15 February 2018 and was undertaken as part of the Directorate-General (DG) for Health and Food Safety’s planned audit programme.

The audit team comprised two auditors from DG Health and Food Safety and one expert from a European Union (EU) Member State. Representatives from the competent authority (CA) the Veterinary Inspection (VI, Inspekcja Weterynaryjna) accompanied the audit team throughout the audit.

An opening meeting was held on 6 February 2018 with the Polish competent authorities. At this meeting the audit team confirmed the objective of, and itinerary for, the audit, and requested additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the audit.

2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of the audit was to evaluate:

1. the actions taken by the Polish competent authorities in order to control Salmonella in poultry, in particular the implementation of the Salmonella National Control Programmes (SNCPs) in some poultry populations (breeding flocks of Gallus gallus, laying hens, turkeys and broiler flocks);
2. the effectiveness of actions taken in response to recommendations in the previous audit report (DG(SANTE)/2015-7508);
3. the system in place to prevent contamination of the production chain of table eggs and poultry meat/meat products by Salmonella.

The scope of the audit covered:

- SNCPs, approved by the Commission Services, in specific poultry populations (breeding flocks, laying hens of Gallus gallus, turkeys and broiler flocks for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017);
- Preventive and control measures (sampling scheme applied, food business operators' control programmes, confirmatory sampling policy, investigation of food-borne outbreaks, timely implementation of trade restrictions in case of Salmonella detection in laying hens, monitoring of Salmonella);
- Competent authority processes (verification and analyses of results, audits);
- Any management tools and laboratories (e.g. information systems for management and monitoring, in particular for collecting data needed to evaluate the means used and results obtained, traceability tools for poultry/poultry products, laboratories participating in the SNCPs).

In order to achieve this objective the audit team evaluated the organisation of the CA and its capacity for implementing the relevant EU requirements.
The table below lists the sites visited and the meetings held in order to achieve the above objective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA central office</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Opening and closing meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional and district offices</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 regions and 6 districts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breeding holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laying hen holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey fattener holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broiler holdings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg packing centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official laboratory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 **LEGAL BASIS**

The audit was carried out under the general provisions of EU legislation and, in particular:

- Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules;


Full references to EU legal instruments quoted in this report are provided in Annex 1 and refer, where applicable, to the last amended version.

4 **BACKGROUND**

This was the third audit (since 2012) covering the implementation of the SNCPs for the various poultry populations in Poland. The Commission lastly audited the actions taken by the Polish competent authorities in order to control Salmonella in 2015. The report (DG(SANTE)/2015-7508) of that audit, which was a follow up of the 2012 audit, is available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit_reports/details.cfm?rep_id=3649](http://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/audit_reports/details.cfm?rep_id=3649)

That report concluded that there were improvements in the implementation of the SNCPs since the 2012 audit, with the implementation of the SNCPS now generally correct. The main area noted as still presenting shortcomings concerned confirmatory sampling (done as a routine instead of exceptionally and the sampling protocol used during it) with the possibility
of causing underestimating of *Salmonella* prevalence. Recommendations were made to address relevant points noted and the follow-up of any recommendations pending is included in section 5.7 of this report.

The table below shows the number of holdings and adult flocks per poultry population included in the scope of this audit, according to data provided by the Polish CA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poultry population</th>
<th>Number of holdings</th>
<th>Number of adult flocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breeders of Gallus gallus</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>1,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laying hens</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>2,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broilers</td>
<td>4,647</td>
<td>40,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey breeders</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattening turkeys</td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>7,875</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the period between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2017, in the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, there was a total of:

- 12 notifications linked to *Salmonella* in table eggs and egg products of Polish origin (approximately 84% of which due to *Salmonella enteritidis*).
- 122 notifications linked to *Salmonella* in poultry meat or poultry meat products of Polish origin (approximately 60% of which were due to *Salmonella enteritidis*).
- 13 notifications related to *Salmonella* detection in feed materials (mostly in rape seed meal) that can be used for poultry. The most frequent serotypes found in feedstuffs/feed material were *Salmonella mbandaka*, *livingstone*, *munster*, *albany*, *kentucky* and *infantis*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Table eggs and egg products (<em>Salmonella enteritidis</em>)</th>
<th>Poultry meat or poultry meat products (<em>Salmonella enteritidis</em>)</th>
<th>Feed materials used for poultry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12(10)</td>
<td>122 (75)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 **PREVENTIVE MEASURES**

**Legal requirements**


The approved *Salmonella* national control programmes.
Findings

1. The Veterinary Inspection under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is the CA for official controls of the implementation of the SNCPs.

2. There is a direct line of command between central, regional and district levels. At regional level there are 16 Regional (Voivodship) Veterinary Offices and 305 District (Poviat) Veterinary Offices (DVO).

3. District veterinarians are responsible for checking the food business operators' (FBO) implementation of the SNCPs following the comprehensive Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) instruction No. GIWpr-02010-1/2017 of 16 February 2017 (see also finding number 74). During on-site visits to holdings, biosecurity is also checked and is documented in template checklists annexed to that instruction (see also finding number 76).

4. Some other procedures/instructions are established for:
   - traceability and labelling of eggs (see also findings number 105, 106 and 108);
   - how to proceed in slaughterhouses during admission and slaughter of positive flocks or of those with unknown status.

5. The first version of the slaughterhouse procedure (created because the VI detected different procedures being applied) was drafted in May 2017 by the VI in cooperation with its regional and district levels and the industry. It was amended twice again in 2017 with minor changes to the forms used and to the frequency of official sampling to confirm FBO testing (see also finding number 23).

6. Vaccination of poultry flocks against Salmonella is voluntary and FBOs do it at their own expense.

7. Entities operating on the feed market (at all stages from primary production up to introduction of feed on the market) are required to report their activities to the DVO. The register containing information on entities in the feed sector is kept in electronic form by the VI.

8. Official control of feed and medicated feed is carried out on the basis of the official feed control plan prepared by the CVO. Laboratories with appropriately qualified staff, as well as equipment for performing the necessary analyses have been designated as part of the controls.

9. The feed control plan is developed on the basis of a risk analysis, including the need to control every stage of the production, distribution and use of feed. The VI sets the frequency of official controls over the feed sector operators, based on risk assessment and with a minimum frequency linked to the operational profile of those operators.
10. For holdings producing feed for their own needs, and using feed for animals, it is the regional level that determines the frequency of official controls. The CA informed that the DVOs can increase the frequency of inspections, above those prescribed by the regions, based on threat and risk analysis and that during those inspections the DVOs use targeted checklists.

11. The report on the implementation of the Feed Control Plan is based on data provided from the district and regional levels by means of a system developed and administered by the State Veterinary Institute in Pulawy. Samples of compound poultry feed tested for presence of *Salmonella*, in 2015-2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of samples taken</th>
<th>positive for <em>Salmonella</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. In 2014, as part of the implementation of the Feed Control Plan, a pilot water monitoring programme for the presence of antibacterial substances was introduced in Poland. In 2015, around 3 400 water samples were taken and from 2016 approximately 4 000 samples are taken annually on holdings keeping poultry and pigs. The VI issued guidelines for the DVOs about treatments that use antibiotics in water and how to deal with positive results. The guidelines prescribe a first screen testing of the samples at the regional laboratory with any positives being sent to the laboratory of the State Veterinary Institute in Pulawy for confirmation and identification of the antimicrobial.

13. The audit team was informed in one of the districts visited that during 2017 there were two holdings with water tests positive for the presence of antimicrobials. The district carried out the required investigation (imposing immediate restrictions on the holdings from the reception of the screening test results) and could confirm from treatment records and laboratory results that the antimicrobial used was an authorised one. After cleaning and disinfection of the drinkers and the respective water supply system provided negative laboratory screening results, all restrictions on the holdings were lifted.

**Conclusions on preventive measures**

14. The preventive measures in place are in line with the approved SNCPs and are suitable for reducing the risk of introducing *Salmonella* in poultry populations.

**5.2 Monitoring and Sampling Scheme**

**5.2.1 General points in relation to SNCPs**

**Legal requirements**

The approved *Salmonella* national control programmes.

**Findings**

15. National legislation is in place for each SNCP. Except for the legislation for laying hens, in force for one year, the legislation for the other SNCPs is in force for several years. The CA has opted to keep the legislation for laying hens under annual renewal for increased flexibility to modify it as needed.

16. FBOs are obliged to notify the DVO, within seven days, about the introduction into the holding of new flocks of all relevant poultry populations. Together with the flock introduction notification, the FBO must also submit the planned SNCP flock sampling schedule. The FBOs' sampling schedule compliance with the SNCP is verified by the DVO which stamps it if approved.

17. Compliance with the frequency of FBO sampling is to be verified by the DVOs in accordance with the CVO instruction GIWpr-02010-1/2017. Districts should perform this verification on-site at the holdings:
   - for all poultry populations;
     - during the annual veterinary controls on a minimum of 5% of all holdings;
     - when carrying out an epidemiological investigation, because of a positive or suspected positive result for one of the SNCPs targeted *Salmonella* serotypes;
     - whenever considered necessary.
   - additionally for laying hen flocks, from 2017, when taking routine official samples (at least once a year on a holding with at least 1000 birds).

18. All laboratories performing tests under the SNCP send all test reports – from FBO and official sampling - to the relevant DVO for both positive and negative results. If FBO or official samples give a positive result or show an inhibitory effect on bacterial growth, the official laboratories are obliged to immediately notify the DVO. For official samples, in addition, the laboratories must also notify the region.

19. One of the DVOs visited informed that it had designated a staff member to check the laboratory test results received against the approved FBOs' sampling schedules for all relevant holdings in that district. If results for FBO sampling did not arrive according to the approved sampling schedule, reminders were sent to the FBO and the responsible district veterinarian was notified. Evidence was shown of one such reminder. In the other DVOs visited, the check of test results received against the approved FBO sampling schedule was left to each responsible DVO veterinarian.

20. FBOs perform their sampling themselves or have private laboratory staff or private veterinarians doing it on their behalf. DVO veterinarians or sometimes private authorised veterinarians perform official sampling. Training of private authorised veterinarians and FBO samplers is provided by the DVOs with, usually, annual refresher courses.
21. The system for performance of official confirmatory tests subsequent to positive FBO tests prescribes for:

- fattening turkeys - in principle no confirmatory tests since 2016;
- broilers - in principle no confirmatory tests from 2017;
- breeding hens and turkeys - from 2017, confirmatory tests in exceptional cases (based on risk analysis, including assessment of cross-contamination during sampling or in the laboratory during the test, level of biosecurity and assessment of the situation regarding *Salmonella spp.* on the holding)
- laying hens;
  - in 2017, in line with the approved SNCP, systematic confirmatory tests following the protocol prescribed in Annex II, part D point 4 of Reg. 2160/2003;
  - from 2018, confirmatory tests only in exceptional cases.

22. From 2017, the SNCP for breeding flocks (chickens and turkeys) includes the requirement to collect samples of birds for antimicrobial residues or bacterial growth inhibitors, if it is suspected that the breeder has applied such a treatment.

23. The CA informed that the procedure for slaughterhouses receiving poultry from flocks declared as having unknown status or being positive for *Salmonella enteritidis* or *typhimurium* is that (additionally to own check sampling in line with Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005) official neck skin samples must be taken from every third flock of that type slaughtered at that slaughterhouse. If the FBO sampling at the slaughterhouse was negative but official sampling was positive then the five subsequent flocks with an unknown status or which have tested positive for *Salmonella enteritidis* or *typhimurium* slaughtered at that slaughterhouse whose meat is not destined for heat treatment must undergo official neck skin sampling.

24. The DVOs prepare six-monthly reports on the implementation of the SNCPs which are forwarded to the region (see also finding number 90). The districts also send monthly zoonosis reports regarding all detected *Salmonella* serotypes to the region and the CA.

5.2.2 Laboratories

**Legal requirements**


Findings

25. Official samples for Salmonella detection are analysed in official laboratories designated by the CA. FBOs can send their samples either to an official laboratory or to any private laboratory designated for SNCP testing.

26. Private laboratories must be approved and officially designated by the CA in order to be accepted as testing laboratories within the SNCP. All laboratories applying for such an approval, after obtaining a satisfactory result of proficiency testing and accreditation of the testing methods by the Polish Centre for Accreditation, are subject to control by the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) to confirm their competence.

27. The NRL supervises official laboratories, as approved by the CVO, by:
   - organising proficiency testing in the diagnosis of Salmonella, isolated from animals and their environment (once a year);
   - organising training and consultation meetings for laboratories (periodically, but at least once a year);
   - performing confirmatory tests on the serological identification of Salmonella isolates obtained under national eradication programmes (all isolates sent by laboratories);
   - performing control visits in selected laboratories to confirm competence in the diagnostics of salmonellosis (at least 3 laboratories per year).

28. All designated laboratories participated in proficiency testing with satisfactory results for 2015, 2016 and 2017. The NRL itself participated in proficiency testing, organised by the EU reference laboratory, with satisfactory results including for the most recent one in 2017.

29. The CA has specifically indicated which data must be included in submission forms accompanying official samples sent for laboratory testing. FBO samples must be accompanied with data specified in the national legislation. All submission forms for laboratory analyses checked by the audit team correctly included the necessary relevant information on the sample, such as:
   - age of the sampled flock;
   - the unique number of the flock and holding;
   - number of poultry in the flock;
   - number of sample units;
   - type of sample;
   - the date and time of sampling and of sending to the laboratory.

30. The CVO developed with the NRL a "Procedure for accepting samples for laboratory tests as part of national programmes for the eradication of certain Salmonella serotypes in poultry flocks". The procedure prescribes that if the submission form is incomplete, or...
anything with the sample is not in line with legal requirements (such as quantity or type of sample, handling, storage, and transport) the laboratory must inform the FBO upon reception of the samples. If the FBO still wants the sample analysed, the test report must include the sentence "Laboratory testing cannot be considered to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the programme for the eradication of certain *Salmonella* serotypes". The CA informed that if this happens this sample is not considered valid for the SNCP and the FBO must repeat it.

31. Under the national programme, laboratories performing laboratory tests within the SNCPs, in the context of bacteriological research (from environmental samples), always test also for inhibition of bacterial growth. This is reported together with bacteriological test results.

32. The official laboratory visited complied with national requirements, and uses the relevant testing methods in line with EU requirements.

33. During the 2016 outbreak this laboratory needed additional days (up to 3 weeks) from the detection of *Salmonella* to provide the results on serotyping. This was caused by different factors including the very high number of additional samples to be serotyped at this crisis period and to exhausting the stock of reagents. In both laying hen holdings visited affected by the 2016 outbreak and with samples tested at this laboratory, the measures restricting marketing of eggs from these holdings as class A eggs (for direct human consumption) had been implemented at the time of *Salmonella* detection (without waiting for serotyping) therefore preventing additional risk for consumers.

5.2.3 SNCP for breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus*

**Legal requirements**


**Findings**

34. The SNCP designates the breeding flock holdings as the place of sampling, in line with Point 2.1.1 of the Annex to Reg. 200/2010.

35. In the holding visited, both FBO and routine official sampling were carried out in compliance with EU requirements on sampling frequency and sampling protocol.

36. 9 out of 10 positive flocks for *Salmonella* serotypes in the 1st semester of 2017 were detected in official sampling and only one in FBO sampling despite a much lower frequency of official than FBO sampling (see also findings number 48, 52 and 53).

37. The national legislation for the SNCP of breeding hens is the Regulation of the Minister for Agriculture and rural development of 30 December 2016 on the implementation of the ‘National Programme for the control of certain *Salmonella* serotypes in breeding
flocks of *Gallus gallus*’ for 2017-2019. This national legislation is not as precise in the indication of the type of sampling to be performed as is done in Reg. 200/2010, namely:

- Reg. 200/2010 requires that in case of suspicion of false results (positive or negative) the confirmatory sampling done should follow the testing prescribed in point 2.2.2.2. b) of its Annex, including the points on additional sampling and non-confirmed source of infection; while
- The national legislation refers to point 2.2.2.1 of the Annex to Reg. 200/2010 and additionally describes some of the requirements of point 2.2.2.2. b) but not the one concerning non-confirmed source of infection.

38. In 2017, in two cases confirmatory tests were carried out in breeding flocks. In both cases the confirmatory sampling gave negative results for targeted *Salmonella*. As this confirmatory sampling was done in line with national legislation, trade restrictions were lifted without the antimicrobial testing or new bacteriological testing that is required in the Annex to Reg. 200/2010, point 2.2.2.2. b) for non-confirmed source of infection.

5.2.4 SNCP for laying hens

**Legal requirements**


**Findings**

39. As a result of the 2016 outbreak, the CVO required DVOs to perform additional sampling (see also finding number 108). When performing this additional sampling, the DVOs followed the protocol prescribed in Annex II, part D point 4 of Reg. 2160/2003.

40. Flocks are reported as positive even when relevant *Salmonella* serotypes are only detected in dust samples, in line with point 4.1 (a) of the Annex to Reg. 517/2011.

41. Starting from 2017, this SNCP has been supplemented with the requirement to always collect samples of birds for antimicrobial residues or bacterial growth inhibitors if official confirmation samples are taken.

42. According to CA data in 2016, *Salmonella* infection was confirmed in 29% of the flocks subjected to confirmatory sampling, which followed the monitoring sampling protocol in point 2.2.2 of the Annex to Reg. 517/2011, instead of that prescribed in Annex II, part D, point 4 of Reg. 2160/2003. From 2017, official confirmatory sampling was carried out in line with Annex II, part D, point 4 of Reg. 2160/2003, and the percentage of flocks confirmed as positive increased to 67% for the 1st semester of 2017.

43. In both laying hen holdings visited, no non-compliances with the SNCP were detected by the audit team. In particular, the sampling frequency and sampling protocol applied were in line with EU requirements for both routine official and FBO sampling.
44. In one holding visited, official routine samplings had been carried out in all flocks in the holding. The CA confirmed that since 2017, and in line with the approved SNCP, official routine sampling had to be carried out in all flocks in laying hen holdings comprising at least 1,000 birds. This goes beyond the EU requirement of official testing of one flock per year per holding.

5.2.5 SNCP for broilers

Legal requirements


Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No 200/2012.

Findings

45. Due to the high number of holdings keeping flocks of broilers in Poland, each DVO is responsible for the selection of the 10% of holdings to be officially sampled annually for laboratory tests within the SNCP.

46. The DVOs confirmed that they do the selection of flocks for routine sampling. This is done on the basis of a risk analysis, covering factors such as the level of biosecurity on the holding, assessment of the situation in terms of the occurrence of *Salmonella* spp., FBO sampling within the correct time frames (point 2.1 of the Annex to Reg. 200/2012).

47. In the holding visited, the sampling frequency and sampling protocol applied were in line with EU requirements for both routine official and FBO sampling.

48. Test results data provided by the CA for 2016, show that positive flocks detected by FBO sampling and official sampling indicate a detection rate approximately 100 times higher from official samples of 4.3% (36 of 829 tests) versus 0.04% (17 of 39 577 tests) from FBO samples (see also findings number 52 and 53).

5.2.6 SNCP for turkeys

Legal requirements


Article 1 of Regulation (EU) No 1190/2012.

Findings

49. In the case of flocks of fattener turkeys, the regional level, according to the CVOs instruction GIWpr-02010-1/2017, coordinates the selection of the 10% of holdings to be officially sampled annually. The region determines, based on the reports on programme implementation in the previous year, the number of holdings to be included in routine tests and, based on risk analysis, decides which districts should take samples and how many should be collected. Information on this sampling schedule from all relevant regions should be forwarded to the VI.
50. In the DVO supervising the turkey fattener farm visited, the audit team could confirm that the procedure followed for selection of holdings for sampling was as described.

51. In both holdings visited (for breeder and fattening turkeys), the sampling frequency and sampling protocol applied were in line with EU requirements for both routine official and FBO sampling.

52. Test results data provided by the CA for 2016 show that positive turkey fattener flocks detected by FBO sampling and official sampling indicate a detection rate approximately 100 times higher from official samples of 3.2% (6 of 187 tests) versus 0.03% (2 of 6 686 tests) from FBO samples.

53. The CA has been aware of this difference in detection rates for several years but cannot identify a motive. The subject has been discussed in different meetings along the years and will be covered again in 2018. Districts visited informed the audit team that they continue to provide regular training (annually mostly) on own-checks sampling.

**Conclusions on monitoring and sampling scheme**

54. The implementation of the SNCPs is supported by a network of laboratories which are able to provide reliable analyses results. The NRL is capable of discharging its responsibilities and tasks as established in EU legislation.

55. The fact that during the 2016 *Salmonella* outbreak some serotyping test results were issued with delays of up to 3 weeks, indicates that the system in place did not satisfactorily deal with high demand on its capacities in crisis times, in particular to assure timely testing. The measures implemented still prevented additional risk to consumers, nevertheless, without the serotyping result, the competent authorities could have faced legal difficulties in imposing the necessary marketing restrictions.

56. The routine monitoring and sampling schemes are implemented in line with the approved *Salmonella* national control programmes for 2017. Nevertheless, for breeding *Gallus gallus* flocks, the national legislation allows lifting of trade restrictions without fully complying with EU requirements on official confirmatory sampling.

57. Test results data indicate that in turkey fatteners, broilers and breeding hens, the official sampling detection rate of *Salmonella* positive flocks is very much higher than with FBO sampling. As the sampling protocol is identical in both FBO and official sampling and regular training is provided to FBO samplers, there shouldn't be such an extreme difference in detection rates.
5.3 Measures taken at time of suspicion and confirmation of Salmonella

Legal requirements


Findings

58. The SNCPs include relevant control measures to implement when infection with targeted Salmonella serotypes is detected. In addition, the CA has issued several instructions detailing measures and actions to be taken, such as on traceability and slaughterhouse procedures (see also findings number 4 and 5).

59. The audit team reviewed one case where an official sample had tested positive for Salmonella enteritidis in a breeding flock. The measures on the holding were taken in a timely manner and in line with EU requirements.

60. The audit team also reviewed official control documents related to two laying hen holdings infected with S. Enteritidis that had been tested due to a potential link to the multi-country outbreak of human salmonellosis linked to Polish eggs (see also finding number 108). In both holdings:

- the measures taken were in line with EU requirements; nevertheless
- the DVOs lacked documented evidence of verification that the FBO fully respected the measure that all eggs were to be heat processed/destroyed as required.

61. Documented evidence for heat processing of poultry meat from infected flocks was also not always available at the DVOs. The audit team was informed that for poultry meat the system in place is for information on own check and official check results and on how such meat is managed is to be collected and kept at central level by the VI.

62. Evidence was seen of prompt notifications by the DVOs to the region and to neighbouring DVOs on Salmonella positive results.

Cleaning and disinfection

63. After targeted Salmonella serotypes are detected, the district veterinary officer collects samples to verify the effectiveness of the cleaning and disinfection before allowing re-introduction of poultry into the henhouse. The districts performed 549 such tests in 2016.

64. The audit team saw evidence of this testing and the reception of results confirming effectiveness of cleaning and disinfection before allowing repopulation.

Epidemiological investigation

65. Due to the number of positive results for the targeted Salmonella serotypes the results of epidemiological investigations are analysed centrally only in exceptional cases, e.g. in the case of a Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) notification.
66. Upon detection of any targeted Salmonella serotypes on a holding, the SNCPs require district veterinary officers to carry out epidemiological investigations to identify the potential source of an outbreak. The CVO instruction GIWpr-02010-1/2017 contains additional information for performing the epidemiological investigations.

67. Reports from epidemiological investigations were available on all affected holdings visited. The investigations were performed by district veterinary officers in line with national requirements and filling out a standardised generic template used for all infectious diseases.

68. Four such investigations were reviewed:

- In two (one for broilers and one for breeders), the investigation identified a potential source of infection; one from infected bedding detected on laboratory testing (Salmonella positive straw), the other from mice infestation of the holding as potential carriers of Salmonella and the proximity of other holdings (with species other than poultry).
- In two other (laying hens) the investigation couldn’t establish the likely source of infection.

69. The CA informed about initiatives to improve the quality of information collected during epidemiological investigations:

- The topic of epidemiological investigations was discussed during training meetings organized in Regional Veterinary Offices for DVO employees. Between 2015-2017, district veterinarians participated in 49 meetings / trainings in which subjects related to epidemiological inquiries were discussed;
- In 2018, it is planned to include the performance of epidemiological investigations as one subject in training that will be carried out at the State Veterinary Institute in Puławy.

70. Some other reactions to the 2016 international outbreak of S. Enteritidis, were:

- organising meetings between VI staff and experts from the NRL for Salmonella, to discuss the links between holdings keeping laying hens - pullet rearing houses - poultry hatching establishments, and the performance of epidemiological investigations;
- deciding that the State Veterinary Institute in Puławy would carry out testing of isolates (within the framework of a scientific research using the whole genome sequencing method) from holdings covered by the SNCPs indicated/selected by the VI, e.g. if there was a need to verify the links between outbreaks transmitted by food back to holdings, or of links between holdings.

71. The Veterinary Inspection Act was amended (amendment published on 9 January 2018) and from 2018 at least two epidemiological investigation teams will be set up by each region (expected to be in place during the 2nd semester of 2018). The teams will be
composed of no more than three people and will be in charge of epidemiological investigations instead of the DVOs. One reason for this decision was to reduce the burden on DVOs of carrying out this investigation in addition to all other tasks they must perform during an outbreak.

Conclusions on measures taken at time of suspicion and confirmation of *Salmonella*

72. Measures imposed on infected holdings/flocks were in line with the EU requirements. However, in some instances there was no documented evidence of verification that all eggs had been heat treated or destroyed.

73. For laying hens in particular the epidemiological investigations have frequently not managed to identify the source of infection and the CA has already taken some steps to address this.

5.4 Official Controls, Verification and Audits

Legal requirements

Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003.


Findings

74. A CVO’s instruction/manual was drafted in 2014 regarding the procedures of DVOs in the control of certain *Salmonella* serotypes in poultry flocks, including the implementation of the provisions of Reg. 2160/2003. The manual is updated as necessary (lastly in February 2017, CVO instruction GIWpr-02010-1/2017) and is being updated again for 2018. The purpose of this instruction is to harmonise the procedures of DVOs on the implementation, and checks on FBO implementation, of the SNCPs.

75. Data on DVO checks performed at holdings showed that the districts visited respected the planned frequencies (see also findings number 17) for those checks, or went beyond them.

76. The CA informed that during 2017 the number of holdings inspected in terms of SNCPs implementation and non-compliances detected were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holdings</th>
<th>Number inspected (adult and/or pullet flocks)</th>
<th>Number with reported non-compliances</th>
<th>Number of FBOs for which fines were imposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>breeding hens</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laying hens</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broilers</td>
<td>1,249</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with the most frequent non-compliances detected being related to bio-security (such as lack of disinfection mats, insufficient facilities/inadequate procedures to maintain good separation between different hen houses in the same holding), inadequate record keeping of disinfection and pest control measures, lack of training to staff about poultry handling, and lack of *Salmonella* testing of staff.

77. If biosecurity shortcomings were found, decisions were issued ordering their correction. Inspection reports with recommendations made linked to non-compliances with legal requirements were verified with an additional inspection. If the recommendation made was linked instead to a good practice, its implementation was verified during the next routine inspection.

78. From 20 December 2016 to 31 May 2017, in connection with the occurrence of highly pathogenic avian influenza, 49 907 holding inspections (including holdings not covered by the SNCPs) were carried out targeting specifically biosecurity.

79. Health certificates for poultry sent to slaughter are issued by district veterinary officers, or authorised private veterinarians, and require a prior check at the holding. The audit team was informed that, in addition to confirming the health status of the animals and SNCP requirements, this prior check is usually also done close to the loading time in order to verify the conditions of the transport vehicle as well.

80. From 2014, under the provisions of the national programme for the movement of poultry from an infected flock to a slaughterhouse, a poultry farmer is obliged to register in the food chain information all positive laboratory tests for *Salmonella*, including of serotypes not covered by the SNCPs.

81. In addition, from 2015, for poultry from an infected flock to be transported to slaughter, a specific health certificate has to be issued, in which the *Salmonella* serotypes included in the SNCPs must be indicated.

82. All health certificates checked by the audit team for poultry going to slaughter from flocks which had tested positive for *Salmonella* serotypes included in the SNCPs were in line with EU and national requirements.

83. Poultry from flocks with negative *Salmonella* test results are sent to slaughter with template health certificates that indicate the date of the test result not the sampling date. One of the six districts visited was the exception and had instructed all veterinarians issuing health certificates to manually add the date of sampling to each certificate.

84. All the food chain information documents seen for poultry going for slaughter also included the date of the test result, or in one case just that the result was negative, not the date of sampling.
85. In the documentation checked, the audit team did not see any instance in which poultry had been slaughtered beyond the limit of three-weeks sampling prior to slaughter that is prescribed in EU requirements. Nevertheless, the lack of date of sampling in the health certificate and food chain information prevents both the veterinarian at the slaughterhouse and the slaughterhouse FBO from also directly and easily confirming that *Salmonella* samples were indeed taken within the last three weeks prior to slaughter.

86. DVO checks detected FBO non-compliances and ensured their correction. Regions showed evidence of verifying the performance of DVOs and detecting and ensuring correction of DVOs’ shortcomings.

87. Regional data showed improvements in DVOs performance, and also increased FBO levels of compliance with SNCP requirements, from 2015 to 2017.

88. Between 2015 and 2017, internal audits performed did not include implementation of the SNCPs in their scope. The Control Office from the VI also did not carry out checks on this subject. However, for 2018 it is planned to carry out internal audits to 20% of the districts with SNCP included in the scope.

### Conclusions on official controls, verification and audits

89. The system of official controls by the DVOs provides satisfactory assurances of FBO compliance with the approved SNCPs.

90. Implementation of SNCPs has not been covered in internal audits but verification from the region over the DVOs' performance is achieving improvements in official controls.

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRESS AND REVIEWING OF THE SNCPs

**Legal requirements**

Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003.

**Findings**

91. The CVO instructed the regions to submit reports for every semester. The regions receive and analyse data from DVOs to confirm the respect of the SNCPs (see also finding number 24) and send that data to the VI together with their analysis. Based on the collected data, an interim and an annual final report is prepared by the VI and sent to the European Commission.

92. Since the audit of 2015, the assessment and review of the SNCPs have resulted in the following changes:

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1 *In its response to the draft report the Competent Authority informed that after the audit, in a letter dated 7 March 2018, the VI recommended to the local Veterinary Inspection bodies that official veterinarians carrying out ante-mortem inspection of birds in a holding indicate on the health certificate for live poultry transported to the slaughterhouse the date on which samples to test for *Salmonella* bacilli were collected from the poultry flock.*
• Testing of birds for residues of antimicrobials – it is required to collect samples of birds for antimicrobial residues or bacterial growth inhibitors in:
  o breeding flocks if there is a suspicion that FBOs used them;
  o laying hen flocks always when official confirmatory samples are taken;

• Amendment to national legislation so that now if there is FBO non-compliance with the obligations set out in the SNCPs, the veterinary services also have the enforcement option of directly imposing a fine (see also finding number 76);

• Changes in the SNCP for laying hen flocks from 2018:
  o it is no longer mandatory for FBOs to depopulate flocks of laying hens, with payment of compensation, if flocks infected;
  o district veterinarians collect official samples in all flocks on a holding, regardless of age, when taking official routine samples (1 flock per year on a holding with at least 1 000 birds).

93. As shown in the table below, from 2015 to end June 2017, Poland was well within the EU Salmonella prevalence target for broilers and for turkeys (breeders and fatteners). Nevertheless, for breeding hens and laying hens, the target was exceeded both in 2015 and 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>EU Target</th>
<th>Poland 2015</th>
<th>Poland 2016</th>
<th>Poland 1-6/2017*</th>
<th>EU average 2015²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laying hens</td>
<td>2% ≤</td>
<td>2.38%</td>
<td>7.15%</td>
<td>2.34%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breeding hens</td>
<td>1% ≤</td>
<td>1.38%</td>
<td>1.46%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broilers</td>
<td>1% ≤</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
<td>0.14%</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey breeders</td>
<td>1% ≤</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey fatteners</td>
<td>1% ≤</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*provisional data

In breeding hens and laying hens a downward trend until 2014 (laying hens) and 2015 (breeding hens) was reversed upward (shown in bold in the table) with a major spike in the prevalence in laying hens in 2016, when an important outbreak occurred in this poultry population. Provisional CA data for the first six months of 2017 shows a downward trend again in both, with laying hens as the only poultry population with prevalence above the EU target.

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² The European Union summary report on trends and sources of zoonoses, zoonotic agents and food-borne outbreaks in 2015
Conclusions on assessment of the progress and reviewing of the SNCPs

94. SNCP data from districts and regions provide the CA with the necessary information to assess their progress throughout the year.

95. The CA has reviewed the data and results obtained within the SNCPs and made adjustment to the actions and measures to be taken improving the efficacy of the control programmes. Provisional CA data for the 1st semester of 2017 confirms this improvement with however, the laying hens population still above target.

5.6 INVESTIGATION OF FOOD-BORNE OUTBREAKS (SALMONELLOSIS) AND COORDINATION

Legal requirements

Articles 3 and 5 of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003.

Findings

96. CA data shows that in Poland among all Salmonella serotypes, the most common cause of disease in 2016 was from S. Enteritidis which was identified as the cause of infection in 7,543 people, an increase of approximately 13.8% from 2015.

97. The identified sources of infection for outbreaks of food-borne diseases caused by Salmonella in Poland in 2016, are presented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of meals</th>
<th>S. Enteritidis</th>
<th>S. Typhimurium</th>
<th>Salmonella spp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desserts (incl. cakes with cream, ice cream)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different meals from eggs (incl. delicatessen)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meat and egg meals (including poultry meat)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other meat dishes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables and fruits</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other dishes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>82</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

98. The Polish authorities have not yet identified the source of the 2016 multi-country Salmonella human outbreaks and, as shown in the ECDC – EFSA joint rapid outbreak
assessment dated 12 December 2017, additional human cases caused by *S. Enteritidis* (belonging to the same clusters as in 2016) have been reported by the Member States.

99. In Poland the epidemiological surveillance of infectious diseases and infections in humans is carried out by the State Sanitary Inspection (SSI). Cooperation between the SSI and the Veterinary Inspection is regulated by national legislation on infectious diseases and food safety.

100. The SSI is also responsible for official control of the hygiene of foodstuffs. In its annual sampling plan the Sanitary and Epidemiological Stations (district level) of the SSI take samples of food, including eggs and poultry, to test for, among others, *Salmonella* contamination. If testing confirms the presence of *Salmonella*, the contaminated batch of product (if it is on the market) is withdrawn from the market. Information about positive results is immediately forwarded by the Sanitary and Epidemiological Station to the DVO supervising the production plant for further proceedings and investigation.

101. In addition, the Sanitary and Epidemiological Station provides information on the detected threat and sends the product identification to the SSI RASFF national contact point. The SSI RASFF contact point forwards the information to the VI.

102. The SSI also asks the VI for information on the results of the investigation. If the product has been delivered to other countries, the SSI RASFF contact point must immediately notify this through RASFF.

103. Evidence was seen of monthly reporting on zoonoses from Sanitary and Epidemiological Stations to DVOs as well as of DVO notifications to the Sanitary Epidemiological Stations about *Salmonella* positive laying hen flocks.

104. The traceability of products covered by this audit are governed by the CVO's "Instruction for official controls regarding the traceability of products of animal origin and labelling" of 23 March 2010. Issues relating to the traceability of eggs are also governed by CVO guidelines sent in three letters in November and December 2016.

105. The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection and the Veterinary Inspection supervise the traceability of consumer eggs and products of poultry origin.

106. The Agricultural and Food Quality Inspection, during 2016, detected as main irregularities in labelling/marking of eggs: the manufacturer's code on the eggs and, labelling with incorrect date of minimum durability and/or incorrect code for the type of production.

107. In 2017, the CVO ordered the DVOs to carry out targeted inspections of egg packing centres. These inspections had a particular focus on verification of egg identification and traceability, and that packing centres could ensure the tracing of all eggs received and delivered by them. The inspections checked:

- full and correct identification of eggs transported from holdings to packing centres;
• documentation accompanying eggs delivered to packing centres;
• correct marking and labelling of eggs (in final consumer packaging or for further processing) dispatched from packing centres;
• the traceability of eggs from reception, through sorting, classifications, packing, storage and all the way to dispatch to the next buyer in the supply chain.

372 egg packing centres were inspected in 16 regions. The information collected will be thoroughly analysed and the CVO will then consider if any additional actions are needed.

108. Both packing centres visited had traceability systems in place capable of satisfactorily tracing one step earlier and one step later in the production chain as required by Art. 18, 2. and 3. of Reg. 178/2002.

109. Due to the outbreak in 2016, the CVO instructed the DVOs to carry out additional official sampling covering also all holdings supplying packing centres that had been identified as the possible source of infected eggs. This resulted in detection of infection in holdings/flocks that had until then only Salmonella negative results.

### Conclusions on investigation of food-borne outbreaks (salmonellosis) and coordination

110. Evidence seen showed good communication between the authorities involved, and that tracing back from the 2016 multi-country Salmonella human outbreaks allowed detection of additional infected holdings/flocks not previously identified.

111. Nevertheless, the 12 December 2017 ECDC - EFSA multi-country outbreak assessment linked to Polish eggs shows additional human cases caused by S. Enteritidis (belonging to the same clusters as in 2016) continue to be reported by the Member States.

### 5.7 Follow-up

The table below summarizes the follow-up to the relevant recommendation(s) made in report DG(SANTE)/2015-7508-MR Final

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Previous recommendation</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The CA should ensure that the results obtained from the implementation of the SNCPs are properly reported as required by Paragraph 2(b) of Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003. Recommendation based on conclusion 77. Associated finding Nos 69 and 74</td>
<td>Not fully addressed. As the confirmatory sampling protocol for breeding hens is not yet completely in line with EU requirements, there are insufficient assurances that reporting will be accurate even if correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The CA should ensure that, in breeding hen flocks, confirmatory sampling policy complies with Point 2.2.2.2 (c), Annex to Regulation (EU) No 200/2010 and that the sampling protocol used in confirmatory sampling is in line with point 2.2.2.2 (b) of Annex to Regulation (EU) No 200/2010. Recommendation based on conclusions Nos 76 and 88. Associated findings Nos 70, 84, 85 and 145</td>
<td>Not fully addressed. Confirmatory sampling policy is now correct. Nevertheless, the confirmatory sampling protocol for breeding hen flocks is not yet completely in line with EU requirements. See findings No 37 and 38. See recommendation No 2 of the current audit report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The CA should ensure that in laying hen flocks: - confirmatory sampling policy complies with Point 4, Part D, Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003, - the sampling protocol used in confirmatory sampling is in line with the one described in Point 4, Part D of Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003, and - flocks are considered as positive even when the relevant Salmonella serotypes are only detected in dust samples, in order to comply with Point 4.1 (a) of Annex of Regulation (EU) No 517/2011. Recommendation based on conclusions Nos 76, 104 and 105. Associated findings Nos 70, 98, 100, 101, 102 and 145.</td>
<td>Addressed. See finding(s) No 21, 39 and 40.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6 Overall Conclusions**

Subsequent to the latest audit (2015) and the *Salmonella* outbreak of 2016, the Polish competent authorities have made several changes to the SNCPs, to relevant national legal instruments, and to instructions and official checks related to the SNCPs.

Official controls in place respect (and sometimes exceed) the planned frequencies of on-site inspections, and detected and effectively imposed correction of FBO non-compliances with SNCP requirements. Verification of the performance of official controls is in place and has
also detected and obtained correction of shortcomings with the official checks.

The SNCPs in Poland are generally in line with EU requirements and well implemented and correct restrictive measures were imposed and/or taken by farmers when needed and mostly well documented.

However, for laying hens in particular, the epidemiological investigations have frequently not managed to identify the source of infection and ECDC-EFSA data indicates that this infection is likely to still be ongoing in Poland. The CA has taken some steps to address this and, in particular, intends to establish dedicated epidemiological teams from 2018.

The implementation of the SNCPs has achieved low *Salmonella* prevalences, in compliance with Union targets, for broilers and for breeding and fattening turkeys. Provisional data for the first semester of 2017 indicates that, for breeding hens, those targets may also be achieved, but not for laying hens.

In 2016, the level of detection of *Salmonella* in turkey fatteners and in broilers was approximately 100 times lower in FBO sampling versus official sampling (0.03% vs. 3.2% and 0.04% vs. 4.3% respectively) and for the 1st semester of 2017, for breeding chickens, there were 10 positive flocks with 9 of these detected only in official sampling which is much less frequent than FBO sampling. The much lower rate of detection of FBO sampling renders this element practically ineffective to detect *Salmonella*, which may be a reason that outbreaks still occur even when all other SNCP measures are correctly in place.

### 7 CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 15 February 2018 with representatives of the competent authorities, at which the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the audit were presented by the audit team. The competent authorities acknowledged the audit team’s findings and provided some comments concerning the noted laboratory testing delays.

### 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The CA should indicate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• what were the root causes for the visited laboratory to be unable to provide timely <em>Salmonella</em> serotyping results at the end of 2016;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• what changes will be made to the system in place to ensure that laboratories approved for testing within the <em>Salmonella</em> national control programmes can provide timely testing results (providing legal support for the control measures required by Art. 5, 3.(c) of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003) even in crisis periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|     | Recommendation based on conclusion: 55.  
     | Associated finding: 33. |
| 2.  | The CA should ensure that, in breeding hen flocks the sampling protocol used in confirmatory sampling, and prior to lifting of trade restrictions, is fully in line with point 2.2.2.2 (b) of Annex to Regulation (EU) No 200/2010 for non-confirmed source of infection.  
     | Recommendation based on conclusion: 56.  
     | Associated findings: 37 and 38. |

### ANNEX 1 – LEGAL REFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Reference</th>
<th>Official Journal</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>OJ L</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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