



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office

DG(SANCO)/7621/2005 – MR Final

FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN LITHUANIA
FROM 8 TO 18 NOVEMBER 2005

IN ORDER TO REVIEW THE UP-GRADING OF CERTAIN CLASSES OF FOOD
PROCESSING ESTABLISHMENTS, CONTROLS OVER CERTAIN PRODUCTS
OF ANIMAL ORIGIN INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION,
CERTAIN LIVE ANIMAL CONTROLS, AND CONTINGENCY PLANS
FOR EPIZOOTIC DISEASES



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ABBREVIATIONS & SPECIAL TERMS USED IN THE REPORT

ABP	Animal by-products
AH	Animal Health
AI	Avian Influenza
AIRBC	Agriculture Information and Rural Business Development Centre
CA(s)	Competent Authority (Authorities)
CCA(s)	Central Competent Authority (Authorities)
CD	Commission Decision
CDB	Central Database (cattle and pigs)
CP	Contingency Plan
CRL	Community Reference Laboratory
CSF	Classical Swine Fever
DVO	District Veterinary Office (Offices)
EBL	Enzootic Bovine Leucosis
ELISA	Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay
EU	European Union
FMD	Foot-and-Mouth Disease
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
LDCC	Local Disease Control Centre
ND	Newcastle Disease
NDCC	National Disease Control Centre
NVL	National Veterinary Laboratory
OIE	Office International des Epizootis
OV	Official Veterinarian
RCA	Regional (County) Competent Authority
SFVS	State Food and Veterinary Services
SRM	Specified risk material
TB	Bovine tuberculosis
TPC	Total Plate Count

1. INTRODUCTION

The mission took place in Lithuania from 8 to 18 November 2005. The mission team comprised 2 inspectors from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in the first week and 4 inspectors during the second week of the mission.

The mission was undertaken as part of the FVO's planned mission programme.

The inspection team was accompanied during the mission by representatives from the Central Competent Authority (CCA), the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS) of Lithuania.

An opening meeting was held on 8 November 2005 in Vilnius with the CCA. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the mission were confirmed by the inspection team, and additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the mission requested.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION

The objectives of the mission were to review:

- the follow-up action taken by the CCA with regard to the up-grading of certain classes of food-processing establishments (red meat and milk);
- the operation of controls over certain products of animal origin intended for human consumption (fresh meat, meat products, minced meat and meat preparations, milk and milk products, farmed game and wild game);
- holding registration, animal identification and movement controls;
- certain animal health controls (tuberculosis, brucellosis, classical swine fever);
- the contingency plans for epizootic diseases, in particular Classical Swine Fever (CSF), Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), Avian Influenza (AI), Newcastle Disease (ND);

.COMPETENT AUTHORITY VISITS			Comments
Competent authority	Central	5	SFVS for the opening, closing, and one intermediary meeting and the Central Animal Database; Fire and Rescue Department and Extreme Situation Crisis Management Centre
	Regional	4	RVA offices, of which two visited as Local Disease Control Centres
	Local	5	At the establishments and farms visited

FOOD PROCESSING ESTABLISHMENTS			Comments
Slaughterhouses		2	High capacity, one integrated with farm
Cutting premises		3	3 integrated, all high capacity

Meat product premises	3	3 integrated, all high capacity
Milk processing premises	2	High capacity
Cold stores	2	1 with integrated custom warehouse, 1 with repacking activity
Border inspection post	1	
Laboratories	1	national reference laboratory
Animal by-products	1	rendering plant
Live animal control sites		
Farms	2	cattle, poultry farms
Cattle dealer with holding	1	
Vehicles disinfection centre	1	

3. LEGAL BASIS

The mission was carried out under the general provisions of Community legislation and, in particular:

Article 12 of Council Directive 64/433/EEC, Article 12 of Council Directive 77/99/EEC, Article 15 of Council Directive 91/495/EEC, Article 12 of Council Directive 92/45/EEC, Article 17 of Council Directive 92/46/EEC, Article 9 of Council Directive 94/65/EC, Article 10 of Council Directive 77/391/EEC, Article 14 of Council Directive 93/119/EC, Article 22 of Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Article 21 of Council Directive 2001/89/EC, Article 7 of Council Directive 91/494/EEC, Article 18 of Council Directive 92/40/EEC, Article 22 of Council Directive 92/66/EEC, Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998.

References to relevant Community legislation in the framework of this mission are listed in Annex I to the report.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1. Competent authority performance

The Lithuanian CA, the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS), is a governmental institution implementing State policy in food and veterinary fields. It has a clear pyramidal structure and line of command. The general structure and organisation has not changed in principle with the exception of the division of competences into 9 departments instead of 7. More detailed information on the Lithuanian CA is available on the following website: <http://www.vet.lt/>. Previous reports DG(SANCO)/7175/2004 and DG(SANCO)/7179/2004 are available on http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fvo/index_en.htm.

Evidence of the implementation of the annual training programme for officials responsible for animal and public health and animal welfare, was seen both at CCA and district CA level. The programme for 2005 was extensive and included public

and animal health and animal welfare topics. However, the training for the implementation of ABP regulation was not yet included. It is foreseen for the 2006 programme.

Observations:

- The Service is making a major effort to obtain accreditation against ISO 17020. Standard Operating Procedures and instructions have been developed, as indicated in the response to the recommendations of the previous report and full implementation is expected in 5 counties before 1/1/2006.
- A database to keep track of establishments and inspections carried out by district and county official veterinarians (OVs) is fully operational and accessible by the different levels of the Service via the intranet and a hierarchy of access is in place. This is considered to be a very useful tool. Some deficiencies or weaknesses in the concept and the use of this database were noted such as:
 - discrepancies between entries in the database and in filed reports not always reflecting reality. The purpose of the visit was not always correctly indicated (financial or health check),
 - some incorrect recording in the database does not allow the actual status of approvals to be readily understood (all former activities are still listed);
- In general, the control and supervision at local, district and regional level was documented and corrective action was monitored;
- Training programmes are organised on several topics.

4.2. Holding registration, animal identification and movement controls

Progress has been made to extend the coverage of the central register of livestock holdings. The CCA stated that more pig keepers are registered and only a few animals are not yet registered (the animals need to be identified only when moved from the farm). No derogations have been given to farmers with only a few animals.

Observations

- The Central Database (CDB) is accessible on the internet for the different stake holders and data are introduced either by farmers, the official (identifier) at county level, or the slaughterhouse responsible. Security measures to protect data are in place;
- Although progress has been made in the registration of pig holdings, only 33,234 out of 143,000 have been registered. The legislation and instructions impose the registration of pig holdings only when transport occurs and relies on a self-declaration by the owner. According to the information given by the CCA the majority of the pig holdings without registration are very small holdings with one to five pigs, mainly held for personal consumption. However, there is no official derogation for small holdings;

- All bovines seen were ear tagged in both ears;
- 64% of cattle passports (1/11/05) have been issued and the CCA expects that, before the end of the year, the whole cattle population will have passports;
- Dealers, transporters, horse marshalling centres, etc. are now approved for intra-Community trade. Transporters who are transporting animals less than 50km, or in small numbers, only need to be licensed by the county. However, a dealer with a holding approved for cattle and pigs was not in compliance: the holding was not equipped for pigs, the quarantine division was not separate from another holding under the same roof and waste was draining through an adjacent holding. A mistake was made by the SFVS of a county when the registration as “dealer” and “premises” of a dealer were attributed (number code of the wrong category used);
- Although 26 markets are partially used for trade in live animals they are not registered in the CDB. Movements through these markets are not reported;
- The OV responsible for ante-mortem inspection in a large bovine slaughterhouse had no direct access to the database for identification and movement;
- In one Region, the definition of “keeper of animals” was not in accordance with Articles 4 and 7 of Regulation (EC) 1760/2000. Their interpretation was that if animals are kept less than 7 days, no registration as a holding is needed and no registration of the movement of the animals is required (Art.7). The premises for the dealer is approved, listed and supervised by the OV but deficiencies were found by the FVO team in relation to sanitary requirements, accuracy of registered data and supervision by the OV. The documentation to be kept by the dealer was not complete and not consistent with an inspection report by the OV (Article 4);
- Not all movements of animals are registered in the database: movement from a holding to the holding of a dealer or to a market is not notified;
- Improvements were seen in the registration of the overall animal movements. However, a large percentage of late notifications still exists although an improvement from June to October 2005 was seen (38% instead of 65%);
- Maintenance of the CDB:
 - In order to rectify mistakes and to complete the database, “mistake protocols” are sent to every district quarterly,
 - A cross-check exercise between the CDB and the establishment’s database allowed the FVO team to identify some discrepancies in both: double entries; changes in status of approval; declaration of slaughter in establishment which were no longer approved; large numbers of on-farm slaughter,
 - Discrepancies between lists of dealers approved by the SFVS and the dealers and transporters registered in the CDB. This indicates that the transmitting of information to the CDB is not fully applied by the SFVS,
 - There is no link between the databases,

- The procedures and conditions for granting subsidies to farmers for the slaughter of bovine animals over 9 months interferes with the obligation to register all holdings and all animal movements.

4.2.1. *Inspection of holdings*

10% of the farms have to be checked every year. A reminder letter was sent by CCA SFVS to the territorial services (district and or region) to intensify the checks to achieve the objective. Up to October, 4,9 % of the holdings had been inspected by the territorial SFVS.

Observations

Neither the central nor the territorial level has issued instructions or guidance for the OV to take action when animal identification requirements are not fulfilled at the slaughterhouse.

4.3. Establishment upgrading and approval

According to Lithuanian legislation, all establishments, with the exception of those granted a transitional period, had to be inspected and approved before 31 December 2003 or be closed.

Observations:

- All establishments visited had an approval and the approval procedure had been followed. Inspection reports with conclusions had been made by the district or county officials and transmitted to the central SFVS.
- In general, most of the establishments visited fulfilled most of the approval requirements, but:
 - The wording in the approval document was on some occasions general and did not mention the activities and the legal basis;
 - Some establishments were carrying out some activities without the appropriate approval: producing minced meat, cold storage, cleaning and disinfection premises;
 - The approval of a cold store had been restricted to the local market because all requirements were not fulfilled; however, Article 4.G of Council Directive 64/433/EEC allows for this approval only if it is limited to the storage of packaged meat;
 - Some establishments were approved without fulfilling all the requirements (eg. cold store; slaughterhouse without cleaning and disinfection facilities; HACCP programme not yet fulfilled);
 - Insufficient separation between imported EU-eligible products and non-eligible products in transit in a cold store with additional approval as customs warehouse.

4.4. Food safety controls

4.4.1. Inspection tasks

The ante-mortem inspection of animals and post-mortem inspection is carried out by the OV's. No auxiliaries are employed.

Under Lithuanian law, all carcasses of domestic and feral pigs and horses must be examined for trichinosis in an approved laboratory.

Observations:

- In one slaughterhouse, the examination of 12 horses was not recorded. Testing for trichina in feral pigs is carried out and 1 positive was detected out of 304 in Klapeida;
- In general, inspections and controls are carried out and documented.
 - ante-mortem inspection was in general carried out in a satisfactory way,
 - post-mortem inspection was carried out by sufficient staff and the correlation between offals and carcasses was ensured. However, in one bovine slaughterhouse, the procedure with retained carcasses was not followed; these carcasses were mixed with, and in contact with carcasses already health marked;
- Insufficient attention is given to the supervision of own-checks: e.g. water testing and final product specification exceeding limits without without any reaction by the OV;
- The territorial authorities (district or region) authorised or tolerated slaughter in 2 premises which were no longer approved for slaughter;
- On-farm slaughter is authorised for personal consumption, but no limits are fixed, no national rules are established and no post-mortem inspection is carried out. In a cattle farm visited, a large number of animals (60/year) were declared to be slaughtered for personal consumption. It was very unlikely that the family was able to consume all this meat;
- Deficiencies in regard to the application of Regulation (EC) 1774/2002 concerning ABP were seen such as:
 - Fallen stock: although already mentioned in a previous FVO mission report DG(SANCO)/7572/2005 and although integrated in Lithuanian legislation, fallen stock is still buried on-site. The private vet and the OV's from the district and the county declared that it is authorised to bury bovine animals if an autopsy proves the absence of infectious diseases;
 - Blood obtained in a pig slaughterhouse (part of an integrated pig farm) was disposed of (allegedly to sewage treatment) without any documentation. The CA had explicitly stated compliance with the requirements of the ABP regulation in this slaughterhouse;

- Whey was dispatched to pig farms. The CA had not authorised the activity as required by Commission Regulation (EC) 791/2005. Documentation related to the dispatch of whey did not comply with the ABP Regulation.

4.4.2. *Hygiene requirements*

In general, the requirements for food hygiene were largely complied with in the majority of the establishments visited but some shortcomings were found in a few of the establishments visited

Observations:

- some cross-flows;
- some rooms wrongly located (spices, packing materials);
- some condensation.

4.4.3. *HACCP and own check controls*

Observations:

- HACCP-based procedures have been developed by food businesses, in collaboration with the official services;
- HACCP audits are scheduled and performed on a yearly basis by joint teams composed of specialists from the county with a representative of the district. Specific checklists are used, deficiencies are detected and corrective action requested;
- Not all establishments have a fully acceptable HACCP programme (34 out of 306 establishments processing meat, meat products, milk and cold stores have not fully implemented HACCP);
- The control of the quality of raw milk and milk products was found to be in compliance with the criteria laid down in Council Directive 92/46/EEC;
- Five samples for the bacteriological control of carcasses as prescribed by Commission Decision 2001/471/EC are taken twice a month either by the OV or in his presence. However, the extremely good results were not critically reviewed by the OV.

4.4.4. *Health marking and traceability*

A system of traceability of products was in place in most of the establishments visited.

Observations:

- Live pigs presented at the slaughterhouses visited were not individually identified. The herd number was applied.
- The labelling of beef in the establishments visited was in compliance with Regulation (EC) N° 1760/2000;

- Correlation between the production sheet, the cookers used and the production dates did not allow traceability in one meat product plant;
- Traceability is in general possible for milk products, but for cream and raw milk in bulk traceability was no longer guaranteed and commercial documents could not demonstrate that these products were fit for human consumption;
- In some cases deficiencies in regard to health marks were noticed:
 - They were not always readable,
 - They were applied before the result of the trichina testing was known, without any additional restrictions or precautionary measures,
 - The health marking of retained or restricted carcasses was inconsistent. The use of a triangular stamp or a triangular stamp in conjunction with the oval health mark was seen. The FVO mission team was informed that from 18/10/05, a new instruction for the use of health marks for unsuitable meat should be in place,
 - Red offals and other edible by-products were not correctly health marked in accordance with Annex I, Chapter XI, points 53 and 55 of Council Directive 64/433/EEC,
 - Use of health marks of another establishment instead of own health mark (cheese cutting),
 - Meat products bearing the national health mark were repacked and the EU health mark applied.

4.5. Animal welfare at slaughter

The mission checked the response by the CA to the recommendation in FVO mission report DG(SANCO)/7175/2004 on the supervision of installations for restraining and stunning and the bleeding time of slaughtered animals.

The CCA stated that training was organised for the OV's and new checklists were developed and have been used since 27/1/05. An overview of the checks carried out with the shortcomings detected had been made.

Observations:

- In the slaughterhouses visited where stunning could be observed no shortcomings were seen in the restraining, stunning and bleeding.

4.6. Animal health controls

4.6.1. Eradication and surveillance programmes:

The programme for animal health controls and prophylaxis has to be approved annually by the CCA and is carried out at regional and district level.

Observations:

- In anticipation of the declaration of freedom from TB and Brucellosis, a substantial change of approach had taken place in the surveillance programmes. The annual plan for the surveillance of infectious diseases was implemented in the visited counties. Compliance with Council Directive 64/432/EEC was noted, but some concerns related to the notification of abortions remain. In one county the CA stated that there is under-reporting of abortions. The national data suggests similar conclusions for the entire country;
- The number of positive cases of rabies is rising significantly (553 in 2004 and 976 in the first nine months of 2005). Oral vaccination for rabies has not started. Instead of the vaccination campaign announced for spring 2005 the vaccination campaign might be carried out this autumn, if legal problems with the call for tender are resolved. Vaccination of pets is mandatory, but a large number of positive rabies cases in domestic animals (116 pets and 80 cattle) has been declared.
- There are no approved collection centres for bovines.

4.7. Contingency Plans

4.7.1. Plan Documentation

4.7.1.1. Diseases covered

Contingency plans (CPs) for FMD, CSF, AI and ND have been approved by Commission Decisions. Eleven other CPs on diseases of the former list A of OIE exist, that have not yet all been forwarded to the Commission for approval.

4.7.1.2. Content of plans

The National Disease Control Centre (NDCC) and the Local Disease Control Centres (LDCC) are responsible for the organisation of the emergency veterinary measures and co-ordination of activities with relevant institutions (army, police, fire & rescue department and municipalities).

The CPs describe the legal bases, the chain of command and the actions to be taken in case of suspicion and confirmation of disease.

Observations:

The following observations apply to the four CPs reviewed during the mission:

- Reviews of the CPs are taking place on an ad-hoc basis: a formal procedure for their regular review is not in place. The AI and ND CPs have been modified recently to reflect changes in legislation and personnel contact details;
- The approved CPs are generic. The plans or parts thereof have not been adapted to particular needs or particular premises (e.g. big farms, slaughterhouses, dealers premises, livestock markets);

- The scope of the CPs has not been extended to facilitate their implementation at specific premises and operation manuals lack detail, instructions and procedures;
- The plans do not specify a methodology for killing animals in accordance with Council Directive 93/119/EC.

4.7.2. Legal provisions and emergency powers

The Law on Veterinary Activities and the implementing Orders by the Director of the SFVS provide the necessary legal framework for disease control and eradication, including notification of suspects, measures to be taken in case of suspicion or confirmation, protection, eradication and compensation. Emergency powers are either directly or indirectly available to the SFVS.

4.7.3. Organisation (suspicion and following confirmation of disease)

The Fire and Rescue Department of the Ministry of the Interior is in the process of drawing up a manual of procedures detailing actions to be taken regarding preparedness against AI, specifying the role in case of an outbreak, including communications with other Institutions, means required and means currently at their disposal.

Copies of CPs were available in print at all administrative levels of the SFVS, the National Veterinary Laboratory (NVL) as well as at other bodies and institutions involved. Private veterinarians do not directly receive CPs but can access them via the internet.

A generic epidemiological questionnaire was available at county level. The epidemiological survey in case of an outbreak will be carried out by the district veterinarians or by the NDCC expert group.

Information regarding measures to be followed to prevent the introduction of AI was sent to different ministries, regional and local veterinary administrations, municipalities, farmers, poultry breeders associations, etc.

Lists of poultry farms were available at county level.

4.7.4. Provision of resources

There are no specific provisions on resources in the contingency plans.

Staff have been nominated at all levels and certain tasks have been allocated. Financial resources are available through a state reserve equivalent to about 200,000 Euro. FMD, CSF and AI are among the diseases for which 100% compensation (including foodstuffs of animal origin, animal feed and equipment) is guaranteed by legislation.

Basic equipment and materials, including disinfection vehicles are available at the SFVS at all levels.

Observations:

- Regarding availability of staff and equipment for culling, purchase of additional material and equipment no agreements have been made on the supply of additional resources;
- Shortage of equipment for stunning and killing has been identified by the CCA and a project is underway to purchase suitable equipment;
- The procedure for the slaughter of birds and other animals has not yet been decided. The procedure to be adopted will be decided on a case by case basis (final decision will be taken following the suggestion of an expert group);
- Discrepancies regarding rendering and incineration capacity given by the private rendering plant and the CCA were noted. The decision to use either rendering or burial for carcasses disposal would be taken on an ad-hoc basis and criteria for the decision making were not laid down.

4.7.4.1. Laboratories

The NVL in Vilnius is designated for FMD, CSF, AI and ND diagnostics. The NVL is currently able to carry out serological testing for FMD, CSF, ND and AI with Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) and haemagglutination inhibition tests (HI) in case of ND and AI. Virus isolation is performed for CSF only. At the NVL construction work is undertaken to build a bio-hazard level 3 (high security) laboratory.

The NVL has an oral agreement with the CRLs on confirmation of positive or suspected cases of AI, ND and FMD. Arrangements have been made for rapid transportation of samples to the CRLs.

The NVL is accredited for testing for FMD, CSF, ND and AI with ELISA and HI in case of ND and AI. Proficiency testing for CSF, AI and ND is performed.

The annually maximum capacity is estimated at about 100,000 ELISA tests and 2,000-3,000 HI tests. The director of the NVL stated that in an emergency other laboratory sections are prepared to deal with poultry disease diagnoses which would increase considerably the laboratory's capacity.

Observations:

- The figures concerning the maximum capacity are estimations as the NVL has not established an internal CP or operations manual on how to gear up the laboratory (e.g. personal, test capacity, provision of material) in case of outbreaks of contagious diseases;
- The NVL does not have the capacity to carry out virus isolation tests as is required in Art. 14 1 a. and Chapter III.2 of the Annex of Council Directive 92/40/EEC;
- Regarding virus isolation only oral agreements have been made with Community Reference Laboratories (CRLs) on the submission of samples for testing;

4.7.4.2. Animal tracing – pre and post outbreak

The system is described in section **Error! Reference source not found.**

Observations:

- Deficiencies of movement notifications (see section **Error! Reference source not found.**) imply that not all movements and locations of bovines and pigs are known or retrievable;

4.7.5. Provisions for emergency vaccination

Observations:

- Vaccination is not considered as an option in the initial phase of an outbreak as the contingency plans do not contain any specific provisions on this issue. There is no vaccine stored to be used in case of an outbreak;
- The issue of strategy of vaccination is only generally covered in the CPs. Specific conditions and scenarios under which vaccination might be instituted and estimations of quantity of vaccine required are not defined;
- Data (e.g. population density of susceptible animals) on the decision to apply protective vaccination applying the criteria laid down in Community legislation are not readily available.

4.7.6. Training and awareness of programmes, simulation

No specific training for outbreaks of FMD, CSF has been provided. Meetings at regional level disseminate recent information but do not include training. An expert group with the involvement of laboratory experts is in operation.

A simulation exercise for FMD was organised in 2002. No exercise has been organised for CSF after approval of the CP in 2004 as the last exercise was organised in 2003. One simulation exercise on AI was organised in 2004 and another one was organised in October 2005. The latest exercise comprised participants from all regions as well as participants from the NVI.

Observations:

- Simulation exercises, real-time alert exercises and alarm drills have not been performed at the frequency foreseen in Community legislation and Lithuania has not yet participated in a cross-border exercise with other Member States.

4.8. Additional information concerning AI

According to information provided by the CA, research into flyways of migratory birds showed that Lithuania is not in any of the main flyways. According to this assessment, there is a low risk of AI outbreaks originating from wild birds in Lithuania.

For that reason, specific early detection systems such as those detailed in Article 2 and Annex II of Commission Decision 2005/734 have not been introduced, apart from the obligation on the farmers to report any unusual mortality. Additionally,

the CA has forbidden markets, etc, where birds are on sale or display. Regarding separation between wild and domestic birds, the CA indicated that there were no free range farms in the areas visited by the mission team, and indirect contact (e.g. via feedstuff) was prevented by adequate storage conditions.

A sampling scheme has been put in place in accordance with Commission Decisions 2005/464/EC and 2005/726/EC. Sampling had been carried out in the counties visited, and evidence was seen of passive surveillance on wild birds found dead. At the time of the visit 375 poultry samples and 175 wild birds have been tested out of 240 samples for wild birds planned in the 2005/2006 programme.

Officials at county level had not received at the time of the mission any additional instruction following amendments by Commission Decision 2005/726/EC.

5. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting with the CCA was held on 18 October 2005 at which the inspection team presented the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the mission. The CCA took note of these and expressed their willingness to correct the shortcomings observed. Additional information concerning investigations and corrective action related to some of the findings of the FVO team were communicated.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Competent authorities performance

In general, the monitoring programme put in place by the CA to supervise the different levels of the services was respected. However, shortcomings were not always effectively detected or corrected.

6.2. Holding registration, animal identification and movement controls

The overall system for holding registration, animal identification and movement controls is in place and, in general, works effectively. The CDB generally complies with Articles 14 and 18 of Council Directive 64/432/EEC. However, although progress has been made, the entry of the data in the CDB is still often delayed and not all cattle have received their passports.

For all species, the number of registered holdings has increased. Nevertheless, significant numbers of small pig holdings are not registered in the CDB. The registration of markets and dealers with holdings is not satisfactory.

The traceability of bovine animals cannot be guaranteed in the case of an outbreak of a rapidly spreading infectious disease, mainly due to late notifications and because the physical location of animals and their movement and contacts is not always known (and cannot in any case be retrieved with the database, or with the transport documents available in the keepers premises, or in the data of the register).

6.3. Establishment upgrading and approval

In general the upgrading process has been well-managed. Approval procedures were followed and were documented in all establishments visited. However a few activities were tolerated in establishments without the appropriate approval or had been approved despite deficiencies in structure and layout.

The implementation of the requirements of Article 12 of Council Directive 97/78/EC concerning the separation of consignments of different origin in custom warehouses is not respected.

6.4. Food safety controls

The food safety controls were in general carried out in a satisfactory way and well documented and no major deficiencies were found in relation to the inspection tasks in the food establishments visited. However some shortcomings were noted in the proper application of the supervision of own-checks and certain elements of the HACCP system as laid down in Commission Decision 2001/471/EC and in the recording of the trichinella examination of horses. Significant numbers are animals are slaughtered on farm for own consumption with no legal requirements for this practice in national legislation.

Shortcomings were also identified in relation to the health marking of carcasses, red offals, other edible by-products and dairy products as provide for in Annex I, Chapter XI of Council Directive 64/433/EEC and in Annex C, Chapter IV of Council Directive 92/46/EC,

The application of Regulation 1774/2002 concerning ABP was not fully guaranteed.

6.5. Animal welfare at slaughter

The animal welfare conditions at the time of slaughter were in compliance with the legal requirements of Council Directive 93/119/EC and the recommendation in FVO mission report DG(SANCO)/7175/2004 had been satisfactorily addressed.

6.6. Animal health controls

In general, the animal health situation is well monitored and, in anticipation of the declaration of freedom from TB and Brucellosis, a substantial change of approach has taken place. Some concerns remains with the reporting and investigation of abortions.

Concerns exist for the evolution of rabies. The number of positive cases is rising significantly and although the vaccination of pets is mandatory, a large number of positives in domestic animals (pets and cattle) have been declared. Oral vaccination of wildlife announced for spring 2005 has not started and might only be carried out this autumn.

6.7. Contingency Plans

The contents of the contingency plans, in general, were in compliance with the relevant Directives and Commission guidelines¹. The contingency plans are well-structured with a clear chain of command and reflect the general situation in Lithuania.

However, implementing provisions for contingency plans are not in place with regard to certain issues (e.g. killing of animals, destruction of carcasses, resources, training) thus limiting the ability of the CA to respond in a timely and effective manner to multiple or large-scale outbreaks.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMPETENT AUTHORITIES OF THE LITHUANIAN REPUBLIC

- (1) To take further measures to complete the registration of livestock holdings, particularly those on which pigs are kept and to complete the issuing of cattle passports.
- (2) To ensure that all animal movements, including those passing through markets and dealers premises are notified and that all data are communicated within the legal deadlines and promptly entered in the CDB.
- (3) To issue instructions and guidance for the OV on how to proceed when animal identification requirements of Regulation (EC) 1760/2000 are not fulfilled.
- (4) To ensure that all establishments are approved for all activities performed only when the requirements have been fulfilled, taking account of the new requirements applicable from 01/01/2006, including the controls of on farm slaughter.
- (5) To ensure that the requirements of Article 12 of Council Directive 97/78/EC concerning the separation of consignments of different origin in custom warehouses are met.
- (6) To ensure that OVs in red meat establishments have a thorough understanding of the importance of analysing and cross-checking the results of operators' own check programmes and to initiate corrective action when needed in accordance with Council Directive 64/433/EEC and the HACCP provisions laid down in Commission Decision 2001/476/EC.
- (7) To enforce controls to ensure the correct application of Regulation (EC) 1774/2002.
- (8) To enforce controls regarding the correct use of health and identification marks in accordance with the legal requirements.
- (9) To ensure the full application of the national monitoring programme for brucellosis in cattle and sheep by improving awareness among farmers to

¹ Council Directives 2003/85/EC, 2001/89/EC, 92/40/EEC, and 92/66/EEC.

notify abortions and to ensure that the follow-up will be done according to Council Directive 64/432/EEC.

- (10) To ensure that measures are urgently taken to eradicate rabies, preferably in a coordinated manner with the surrounding countries facing the same problems.
- (11) To adapt contingency plans or parts thereof to particular needs or particular premises (e.g. big farms, slaughterhouses, dealers' premises, livestock markets).
- (12) To implement provisions for contingency plans with regard to certain issues (e.g. killing of animals, destruction of carcasses, resources, training).
- (13) To ensure that the contingency plans including the operational manuals provide sufficient detail, instructions and procedures for the implementation of all provision of the contingency plans to bring them fully into line with Council Directives 2003/85/EC, 2001/89/EC, 92/40/EEC and 92/66/EEC.

ADDENDUM

On 31 January 2006 the Lithuanian authorities informed the Commission services of actions either already taken or planned in respect of the recommendations set out in the draft report.

ANNEX

COMMUNITY LEGISLATION CITED IN THIS REPORT

Legal acts cited in this annex refer, where applicable, to the last amended version.

European legislation	OJ	Title
Council Directive 64/432/EEC	L 121, 29.07.1964, p. 1977	Council Directive 64/432/EEC of 26 June 1964 on animal health problems affecting intra-Community trade in bovine animals and swine
Council Directive 64/433/EEC	L 121, 29.07.1964, p. 2012	Council Directive 64/433/EEC of 26 June 1964 on health conditions for the production and marketing of fresh meat
Council Directive 77/391/EEC	L 145, 13.06.1977, p. 85	Council Directive 77/391/EEC of 17 May 1977 introducing Community measures for the eradication of brucellosis, tuberculosis and leucosis in cattle
Council Directive 77/96/EEC	L 026, 31.01.1977, p. 67	Council Directive 77/96/EEC of 21 December 1976 on the examination for trichinae (<i>Trichinella spiralis</i>) upon importation from third countries of fresh meat derived from domestic swine
Council Directive 77/99/EEC	L 026, 31.01.1977, p. 85	Council Directive 77/99/EEC of 21 December 1976 on health problems affecting the production and marketing of meat products and certain other products of animal origin
Council Directive 91/494/EEC	L 268, 24.09.1991, p. 35	Council Directive 91/494/EEC on animal health conditions governing intra-Community trade in and imports from third countries of fresh poultry meat
Council Directive 91/495/EEC	L 268, 24.09.1991, p. 41	Council Directive 91/495/EEC of 27 November 1990 concerning public health and animal health problems affecting the production and placing on the market of rabbit meat and farmed game meat
Council Directive 92/40/EEC	L 167, 22.06.1992, p. 1	Council Directive 92/40/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of avian influenza
Council Directive 92/45/EEC	L 268, 14.09.1992, p. 35	Council Directive 92/45/EEC of 16 June 1992 on public health and animal health problems relating to the killing of wild game and the placing on the market of wild-game meat
Council Directive 92/46/EEC	L 268, 14.09.1992, p. 1	Council Directive 92/46/EEC of 16 June 1992 laying down the health rules for the production and placing on the market of raw milk, heat treated milk and milk-based products
Council Directive 92/66/EEC	L 260, 05.09.1992, p. 1	Council Directive 92/66/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of Newcastle disease
Council Directive 93/119/EC	L 340, 31.12.1993, p. 21	Council Directive 93/119/EC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing
Council Directive 94/65/EC	L 368, 31.12.1994, p. 10	Council Directive 94/65/EC of 14 December 1994 laying down the requirements for the production and placing on the market of minced meat and meat preparations
Commission Decision 98/139/EC	L 038, 12.02.1998, p. 10	Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by

European legislation	OJ	Title
		Commission experts in Member States
Council Directive 2001/89/EC	L 316, 01.12.2001, p. 5	Council Directive 2001/89/EC of 23 October 2001 on Community measures for the control of classical swine fever
Council Directive 2003/85/EC	L 306, 22.11.2003, p. 1	Council Directive 2003/85/EC of 29 September 2003 on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease repealing Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC and amending Directive 92/46/EEC
Commission Decision 2000/678/EC	L 281, 07.11.2000	Commission Decision 2000/678/EC of 23 October 2000 laying down detailed rules for registration of holdings in national databases for porcine animals as foreseen by Council Directive 64/432/EEC
Commission Decision 2001/471/EC	L 165, 21.06.2001, p. 48	Commission Decision 2001/471/EC of 8 June 2001 laying down rules for the regular checks on the general hygiene carried out by the operators in establishments according to Directive 64/433/EEC on health conditions for the production and marketing of fresh meat and Directive 71/118/EEC on health problems affecting the production and placing on the market of fresh poultry meat
Commission Decision 2004/402/EC	L 123, 27.04.2004, p. 111	Commission Decision 2004/402/EC of 26 April 2004 approving contingency plans for the control of avian influenza and Newcastle disease
Commission Decision 2004/431/EC	L 189, 27.05.2004, p. 31	Commission Decision 2004/431/EC of 29 April 2004 approving certain contingency plans for the control of classical swine fever
Commission Decision 2004/435/EC	L 189, 27.05.2004, p.45	Commission Decision 2004/435/EC of 29 April 2004 approving certain contingency plans for the control of foot-and-mouth disease
Commission Decision 2004/840/EC	L 361, 08.12.2004, p. 41	Commission Decision 2004/840/EC of 30 November 2004 approving programmes for the eradication and monitoring of certain animal diseases and of checks aimed at the prevention of zoonoses presented by the Member States for the year 2005 and fixing the level of the Community's financial contribution
Commission Decision 2005/464/EC	L 164, 24.06.2005, p. 52	Commission Decision 2005/464/EC of 21 June 2005 on the implementation of survey programmes for avian influenza in poultry and wild birds to be carried out in the Member States
Commission Decision 2005/726/EC	L 273, 19/10/2005, p. 21	Commission Decision 2005/726/EC of 17 October 2005 amending Commission Decision 2005/464/EC on the implementation of survey programmes for avian influenza in poultry and wild birds to be carried out in the Member States,
Commission Decision 98/139/EC	L 038, 12.02.1998, p. 10	Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in Member States
Commission Regulation (EC) No 911/2004	L 163, 30.04.2004, p. 65	Commission Regulation (EC) No 911/2004 of 29 April 2004 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards eartags, passports and holding registers

European legislation	OJ	Title
Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1082/2003	L 156, 25.06.2003, p. 9	Commission Regulation (EC) No 1082/2003 of 23 June 2003 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the minimum level of controls to be carried out in the framework of the system for the identification and registration of bovine animals
Commission Regulation (EC) No. 494/98	L 060, 28.02.1998, p. 78	Commission Regulation (EC) No 494/98 of 27 February 1998 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 820/97 as regards the application of minimum administrative sanctions in the framework of the system for the identification and registration of bovine animals
Council Directive 2000/15/EC	L 03, 03.05.2000, p.34	Council Directive 2000/15/EC of 16 April 2000, amending Council Directive 64/432/EEC, on health problems affecting intra-community trade in bovine animals and swine.
Council Directive 2001/89/EC	L 316, 01.12.2001, p. 5	Council Directive 2001/89/EC of 23 October 2001 on Community measures for the control of classical swine fever
Council Directive 2003/85/EC	L 306, 22.11.2003, p. 1	Council Directive 2003/85/EC of 29 September 2003 on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease repealing Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC and amending Directive 92/46/EEC
Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002	L 31, 01.02.2002, p. 1	Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety
Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EC) No. 1760/2000	L 204, 11.08.2000, p. 1	Regulation (EC) No. 1760/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 July 2000 establishing a system for the identification and registration of bovine animals and regarding the labelling of beef and beef products and repealing Council Regulation EC No. 820/97