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FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT

CARRIED OUT IN

LATVIA

FROM 04 TO 08 MARCH 2013

IN ORDER TO EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS IN RELATION TO ANIMAL HEALTH, INCLUDING PROVISIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS DURING DEPOPULATION FOR DISEASE CONTROL

Executive Summary

This report describes the outcome of a Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) audit in Latvia carried out between 4 and 8 March, as part of the FVO audit programme for 2013. The objective was to evaluate the resources and arrangements put in place to implement the European Union requirements for contingency planning in the event of one or more outbreaks of epizootic diseases.

Overall, the report concludes that:

A general contingency plan (CP) for dealing with outbreaks of all types of epizootic disease is in place. The general plan is supported by disease specific operational manuals which give targeted instructions on how to control each disease. Command and control structures for dealing with epizootic disease outbreaks are defined at both central and local levels with the possibility to use national government and regional government crisis committees if the need arises. Simulation exercises in dealing with epizootic disease take place on a regular basis and many of them involve cooperation with other countries under the auspices of the Nordic-Baltic Veterinary Contingency Group (NBVCG).

However, in a major outbreak there would be insufficient animal by-product processing capacity to deal with carcase disposal. In addition, sites for burning and deep burial have not been agreed with the environmental authorities.

Contingency plans have not yet incorporated the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1099/2009 and the killing methods currently prescribed and guidance in place are not fully in line with the requirements of that Regulation.

In relation to the fact finding elements of the mission the audit team found that formal risk assessments for epizootic diseases were not in place but there was a good level of awareness of the current epizootic threats amongst the stakeholders met. Although formal biosecurity schemes are not in place, sites visited by the audit team had appropriate levels of biosecurity.

The report makes recommendations to the Central Competent Authority (CCA) aimed at addressing areas in which further improvements are required.

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Abbreviations and definitions used in this report

Abbreviation	Explanation
AHS	African Horse Sickness
AI	Avian Influenza
ASF	African Swine Fever
BT	Bluetongue
BIOR	The Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and the Environment
CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority
CP	Contingency Plan
CSF	Classical Swine Fever
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officer
DG(SANCO)	Health and Consumers Directorate General
ELISA	Enzyme Linked ImmunoSorbent Assay
EHD	Epizootic Haemorrhagic Disease of Deer
EU	European Union
EU-RL	European Union Reference Laboratory
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
FVS	Food and Veterinary Service (*Pārtikas un Veterinārais Dienests*)
IT	Information Technology
LDCC	Local Disease Control Centre
LSD	Lumpy Skin Disease
MS	Member State
NBVCG	Nordic-Baltic Veterinary Contingency Group
ND	Newcastle Disease
NDCC	National Disease Control Centre
NRL	National Reference Laboratory
PPR	Peste des Petits Ruminants
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
RP	Rinderpest
RVF	Rift Valley Fever
SGP	Sheep and Goat Pox
SVD	Swine Vesicular Disease
TSU	Territorial Structural Unit

VS	Vesicular Stomatitis

1 Introduction

This audit took place in Latvia from 4 to 8 March 2013 and was undertaken as part of the FVO (Food and Veterinary Office) planned audit programme. The audit team comprised three auditors from the FVO. The team was accompanied throughout the audit by representatives of the Food and Veterinary Service (*Pārtikas un Veterinārais Dienests* – FVS) which is the Central Competent Authority (CCA) within the scope of this audit.

2 Objectives

The principal objective of this audit was to evaluate the resources and arrangements put in place to implement the European Union (EU) requirements for contingency planning, including provisions on the protection of animals during depopulation, in the event of one or more outbreaks of the following epizootic diseases: Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Bluetongue (BT), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), African Swine Fever (ASF), Swine Vesicular Disease (SVD), African Horse Sickness (AHS), Avian Influenza (AI), Newcastle Disease (ND) and a number of other diseases (Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), Epizootic Haemhorragic Diseases of Deer (EHD), Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Rinderpest (RP), Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP) and Rift Valley Fever (RVF).

A secondary objective was to gather information and to identify areas of best practice in relation to a number of issues relevant to epizootic disease control but not explicitly specified in EU legislation. Such issues include routine monitoring for epizootic disease, the deployment of risk analysis with subsequent determination of alert levels and Member State (MS) requirements for biosecurity measures on farms.

Whilst contingency planning for all of these diseases is included within the scope of this audit, the audit concentrated, in particular, on CSF, FMD and AI. CSF was considered due to the recent presence of the disease. FMD is one of the most difficult diseases to contain and affects several livestock species. AI is chosen as an example of a poultry disease where specific requirements for contingency plans are laid down in European legislation.

The requirements of Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 apply since 1 January 2013 and the audit team carried out an evaluation of the implementation of the requirements of Article 18(1),(2) and (3) of this Regulation.

In pursuit of this objective, the following sites were visited:

MEETINGS / VISITS		no.	COMMENTS
Competent Authorities	Central	2	One opening and one closing meeting
	Regional	3	One TSU visited and staff from two other TSUs met during on-the spot visits. Members of a Civil Defence Committee also met in the TSU visited
Laboratories		1	The NRL for the diseases in the scope of this audit
Holdings		2	One large pig farm and one large poultry farm
Markets and Assembly centres		1	One assembly centre trading calves to another MS
Store for equipment used for disease control		1	Regional store of state owned equipment
Central identification and		1	Agricultural Data Centre

registration database for livestock		
Private veterinarians	3	Met during on-the-spot visits

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

4 Background

Given the potential impact of outbreaks of epizootic disease, it is important that Member States can react immediately and effectively in a co-ordinated manner and in co-operation with neighbouring countries. EU legislation requires MS to have contingency plans in place to combat such outbreaks so as to reduce their adverse consequences.

Of critical importance to the suppression of an outbreak of epizootic disease, is the swiftness of initial diagnosis and the deployment of the first stages of the contingency plan (CP).

From October to December 2012 there has been an outbreak of CSF in wild boars and also affecting three back-yard holdings with a total of 16 pigs. Details of the outbreak are described in presentations given to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (December 2012 and January 2013). These presentations are available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/dgs_consultations/regulatory_committees_en.htm

With regard to other diseases the historical situation in Latvia is as follows:

Disease	**Year of last occurrence**
FMD	1987
ASF	never reported
ND	2006 in wild birds
AI	never reported
BT	2012(BTV-14)
SVD	never reported
AHS	never reported

Contingency planning for epizootic diseases has been assessed in a previous FVO audit DG(SANCO) 8259/2009 (hereafter referred to as FVO report 8259/2009). It is published on the FVO website at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/index_en.cfm

This audit is a reassessment of the current situation following a revision of contingency plans to bring them into line with the current structure of the FVS. There are no open recommendations from FVO report 8259/2009 in relation to contingency planning.

5 Findings And Conclusions

5.1 Competent Authorities

Legal requirements:

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 lays down rules for the performance of official controls; in particular Article 4 requires the designation of competent authorities (CAs); co-ordination and co-operation between and within CAs and that sufficient legal powers are available to the CAs. The availability of sufficient legal powers for the implementation of contingency planning is specified in most of the relevant Directives (see Annex 2). In addition Council Directive 2003/85/EC (Article 74 (3)(d), (g) and (i) and Annex XVII (6) requires close cooperation with environmental authorities and enforcement bodies in relation to FMD control and Council Directive 2005/94/EC on the control of avian influenza (Article 62 (3)) requires close cooperation between the CAs responsible for the different sectors, particularly those in charge of animal health, public health, environmental matters and health and safety of workers.

Findings:

5.1.1 Competent Authority structure

The development of contingency plans requires extensive cooperation within and between CAs and that responsibilities of the various CAs when dealing with an outbreak of epizootic disease are formally defined and agreed in advance. In most cases this entails a change in the command structures of the CAs. Section 5.2.3 below outlines any such changes.

Information on the structures of the CAs can be found in the FVO country profile for Latvia (see http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/country_profiles/CP_Latvia.pdf).

In summary, the lead authority for contingency planning is the FVS of the Ministry of Agriculture. Official controls at a local level are implemented by 11 Territorial Structural Units (TSUs) of the FVS.

5.1.2 Legal powers available to the CAs

The Latvian Law on Veterinary medicine has been in force since 2001 and was last amended in 2010. It sets out the obligations for the FVS to control epizootic diseases, gives powers of entry into premises and allows the imposition of restrictions and other control measures to deal with epizootic disease outbreaks.

A series of Latvian Cabinet Regulations list the serious animal infectious diseases, provide for the establishment of a state committee (State Emergency Situations Operational Committee) to coordinate the response of various institutions (including police, army and environmental authorities) to emergency situations, provide further details on control measures, provide for emergency stocks of equipment for dealing with outbreaks and describe the procedure on the granting of compensation.

The Latvian Law on Civil Protection of 1992 provides a legal basis for state administrations, municipal institutions and other organizations to be required to assist in the control of major disease outbreaks. This includes the involvement of County Civil Defence Committees when required. These committees include local representatives of the fire service, environmental service, forestry service and local government and play a role in providing staff and equipment to deal with epizootic disease outbreaks.

Several orders issued by the FVS set out the requirements for TSUs when dealing with suspected or confirmed outbreaks of epizootic diseases.

5.1.3 Cooperation between and within CAs in development of CPs

The FVS is responsible for development and updating of CPs. The general part of the CP must be updated at least once every two years. The operational manuals on control of specific diseases must be updated at least every five years and more frequently in the case where there are changes in legislation or in specific disease situations. From 2010, TSUs are required to update their local contingency plans at least every three years.

A number of agreements and contracts have been or are being established as part of the contingency planning process. These include:

- an agreement with a rendering plant on the destruction of carcases during disease outbreaks;
- an agreement with a company on the provision of CO_2 for gassing of poultry (currently under negotiation see section 5.5.2 below);
- an agreement with a company on the provision of disinfectants.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- The FVS takes full responsibility for drafting of the CCA general CP and the disease specific operational manuals. Other organisations are consulted on specific details e.g. the National Reference Laboratory (NRL) provides information on diagnostic tests that are carried out and on diagnostic capacity time for turn-around of results etc. However, there is no formal procedure for consulting other organisations in the development of contingency plans;
- The Ministry of the Environment has not been specifically consulted in the development of the CCA general CP and no formal agreements have been established with respect to the sites that could be used for disposal of carcases by burning or burial either of which could be an important means of carcase disposal in dealing with epizootic disease (see section 5.6 below);
- In the case of animal disease outbreaks with a zoonotic component there is an agreement between the FVS and the Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC) which is responsible for the implementation of public health policy. The CCA informed the audit team that medical staff from the CDPC participated in an AI exercise in 2005;

Conclusions on Competent Authorities:

CAs have been designated and sufficient legal powers are available to develop CPs and operational manuals to control epizootic outbreaks in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004. However, the coordination with the environmental authorities required in Article 74(3) of Council Directive 2003/85/EC and Article 62(3) of Council Directive 2005/94/EC should be improved particularly in respect of identifying potential sites for the disposal of carcases in a major epizootic disease outbreak.

5.2 Contingency Plans

Legal requirements:

Requirements for Member States to have contingency plans to control disease outbreaks are required for the following diseases: FMD (Council Directive 2003/85/EC), BT (Council Directive 2000/75/EC), CSF (Council Directive 2001/89/EC), ASF (Council Directive 2002/60/EC), SVD and a number of other diseases (Council Directive 92/119/EEC), AHS (Council Directive 92/35/EEC), AI (Council Directive 2005/94/EC) and ND (Council Directive 92/66/EEC). A summary of some specific requirements of each is provided in Annex 2.

Requirements relating to holding registration, animal identification and movement controls for cattle, sheep and pigs are laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1760/2000, Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 and Council Directive 2008/71/EC respectively, and associated implementing measures.

Findings:

5.2.1 Coverage and Approval

The Latvian contingency planning system is based on the top level CCA general CP covering the common aspects of controlling all relevant diseases. This CCA general CP also sets out the relevant legal and financial provisions. It contains information on the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC) and the Local Disease Control Centres (LDCCs), on the chain of command, expert groups, availability of resources, establishment of protection and surveillance zones, provisions for vaccination, training and public awareness, and general data on laboratories. Beneath the CCA general CP are more detailed disease specific operational manuals. These provide details of the actions to be taken in case of suspicion and confirmation (including actions in the protection and surveillance zones), vaccination of animals (if relevant) and the killing and disposal of animals. The operational manuals for AI and ASF also contain a detailed diagnostic procedure for differential diagnosis and confirmation of the disease. There is also a manual setting out guidelines on humane killing (see section 5.5 below). Local level TSU contingency plans have been in place since 2010. These TSU plans must be updated at least every three years.

5.2.2 Documentation

The current status of contingency planning documentation available in Latvia is as follows:

Documentation	**Year of last update**
General CP	2013
FMD	2008
CSF	2013

BT	2006
AI	2010
ND	2010
AHS	2004
ASF	2011
SVD (also covers VS, EHD, PPR, RP, LSD, SGP and RVF	2004

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the CCA general CP and the disease specific operational manuals are published on the internet at:

  http://www.pvd.gov.lv/lat/lab_izvlne/normatvie_akti/pvd_izdotie_dokumenti/pvd_instrukcijas ;

- staff at the assembly centre visited were able to easily locate contingency planning documentation on the FVS website;

- TSU staff met during the on the spot visits had access to hard copies of relevant and up-to-date contingency planning documentation - both national and locally adapted. They were aware that for the most up-to-date version they should consult the internet.

- the CCA informed the audit team that TSU staff can give suggestions for improvement of the CCA general CP and the disease specific operational manuals based on their experience gained as a result of dealing with outbreaks or simulation exercises. Feed back of information is gathered during the regular three monthly meetings held between FVS headquarters staff and TSU staff;

- the CCA general CP and the CSF specific operational manual had been updated in February 2013 to take into account the experience gained from dealing with the 2012 CSF outbreak in wild boars and back-yard holdings;

- the local CP in the TSU offices visited had been updated in February 2013 as a result of the recent CSF outbreak. The local contingency plans of the TSUs responsible for the farms visited had been introduced in 2010;

- the internal audit unit of the FVS is scheduled to carry out an audit of the FVS headquarters and TSU contingency plans in 2014. This is the first year by which all TSUs should have updated their local contingency plans;

- in the local CP of the TSU visited the section indicating which sites could be used for burial or burning of carcases was not completed. The head of the TSU indicated that this issue had been discussed with local environmental colleagues but that it had not been possible to come to a conclusion on which sites could be used.

5.2.3 Competent Authority command structure during an epizootic outbreak

The CP describes the chain of command in place, and the role of the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO). An Operational Group would be summoned by the CVO to carry out duties in the NDCC. The members of this group are identified in the CP. Additionally, in the event of a serious epizootic outbreak a State Emergency Situations Operational Committee could be constituted under the guidance of the Ministry of Interior, in order to coordinate the activities of the various state institutions involved. The CVO would be part of this committee.

5.2.3.1 National Disease Control Centre (NDCC)

In the event of an epizootic disease outbreak the NDCC is established at the headquarters of the FVS in Riga. The centre is headed by the CVO who is responsible for the major decisions on the day-to-day handling of an epizootic outbreak.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the NDCC is virtual in the sense that staff would continue to work at their normal workstations which would give them access to all the information technology (IT) and communications equipment needed to handle an outbreak. This includes the central database on animal identification and movements, mapping software, international contacts, etc.;

- the NDCC would give support and advice to local disease control centres (LDCCs) on controlling an outbreak;

- the NDCC is responsible for drawing up and publishing the protection and surveillance zones based on information provided by the LDCCs;

- if necessary, liaison with the environmental authorities at the national level could take place in the State Emergency Situations Operational Committee.

5.2.3.2 Local Disease Control Centre (LDCCs)

In the event of an epizootic outbreak LDCCs will initially be established in the nearest TSU office. However, in the event of a major epizootic outbreak LDCCs could be located in various types of locations (e.g. community halls) local to the outbreak.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- in the TSU visited there had been three backyard holdings which had initially inconclusive serology for CSF as a result of surveillance sampling during the recent CSF outbreak. In each case restrictions were imposed, an epidemiological report was completed and farms were visited daily by an official veterinarian and checked for clinical signs. No clinical signs were seen and subsequent tests were negative for CSF. The audit team examined the file of one of these suspect cases and confirmed that procedures had been carried out in accordance with the requirements for dealing with suspect cases;

- as with the NDCC, LDCCs can be virtual with staff continuing to work at their normal workstations. This was confirmed at a visit to a TSU which was involved in controlling the

recent CSF outbreak in wild boars. The staff had access to IT and communications equipment needed to handle the outbreak including the central database on animal identification and movements;

- specific alternative locations for a LDCC had not been identified in the TSU visited. The CA informed the audit team that a decision on locating the LDCC at a location different to the TSU would depend on the severity of an outbreak, where it was located and the availability of suitable facilities nearby. In summary, the CA considered that the LDCC would only be located outside the TSU premises in exceptional circumstances;

- members of a County Civil Defence Committee met in a TSU visited included: the deputy head of the local council, a Forestry Service representative who could give expert advice on wildlife issues relating to disease control (he had been involved in organisation of the control of the wild boar population in the recent CSF outbreak), and an Environmental Service representative. The Committee could organise the provision of staff and equipment to help in the control of an epizootic outbreak. The Committee had also issued a prohibition on the movement of pigs in three local parishes due to the recent CSF outbreak in wild boars;

5.2.4 Financial provisions

The CP details the compensation arrangements for the compulsory killing of animals in case of emergency. Epizootic disease surveillance and disease control is financed from general taxation and financial resources are allocated from an emergency reserve fund. Compensation rates are fixed for each category of animal and they have not been revised since 2004. The plan does not indicate time limits for paying compensation. In the plan funding is provided for the purchase of drugs and disinfectants, veterinary instruments and other equipment, salaries for veterinary staff, transport costs, compensation to the farmer for animals slaughtered for disease control purposes, compensation for the disposal of carcases, compensation for damage to buildings, and emergency vaccination campaigns.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the CCA indicated that despite the compensation rates listed in the general CP remaining unchanged since 2004, the farmers compensated for pigs that were killed during the recent CSF outbreak had not complained about compensation rates being too low.

5.2.5 Establishment and enforcement of protection and surveillance zones

The CCA general CP sets out the rules for establishment of protection and surveillance zones. They will be established on the basis of order issued by the CVO immediately after the diagnosis of a disease has been officially confirmed by laboratory. Restrictions will apply to the infected premises, the protection zone (radius of not less than 3 km around the infected premises; the surveillance zone (radius of not less than 10 km around the infected premises). In the case of an outbreak of AHS or BT, the protection zone will be established with the radius of not less than 100 km, and the surveillance zone with a radius of not less than 150 km round the infected premises. Geographical, meteorological, epidemiological and administrative factors will be taken into account when the boundaries of the zones are drawn up. If any zone includes parts of the territory of another country, the veterinary service of that country shall be informed to allow common measures to be organised to control and eradicate the disease. Protection and surveillance zone restrictions shall be lifted on

the basis of order issued by the CVO after the disease has been eradicated and the required time has elapsed after final cleaning and disinfection.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- derogations with respect to permitting movement to slaughter for animal welfare purposes – e.g. overstocking on farms in the surveillance zone during an outbreak have not been considered;

- in the state equipment store visited there were signs that would be used to indicate the boundary of the 3km protection and 10km surveillance zones. There was also a self contained mobile disinfection trailer unit with integrated generators and power washers that could be used for disinfection of vehicles;

- maps of the protection and surveillance zones are to be posted on the website of the FVS as well as being supplied to the media for publication.

5.2.6 Communication procedures during an outbreak

The FVO audit team noted that:

- modern communication means are available (telephone, e-mail, internet etc.) to allow rapid exchange of information between the NDCC and LDCCs;

- farmers are kept informed of the disease situation via the media and also by on-the-spot visits by official veterinarians in protection and surveillance zones during an outbreak. The general population is informed by media information campaigns carried out by the FVS at a national level.

5.2.7 Availability of Epidemiological expertise

Information on the expert groups is set out in the CCA general CP. A single expert group for all diseases comprises staff from the FVS, scientific and educational bodies. Virologists, microbiologists, meterologists, veterinary epidemiologists, veterinary pathologists and experts in wildlife are also included. According to the plan, experts are involved in training officials and practising veterinarians in epizootic disease control. The CCA general CP states that the experts initiate action in accordance with an order from the CVO and participate in eradication and control measures. In practice the exact composition of the expert group will vary according to the particular epizootic disease outbreak being dealt with and the actual expertise required.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- signed attendance lists were available for four meetings of the expert group that had taken place between 26 November 2012 to the 28 January 2013. These meeting were convened to deal with the recent outbreak of CSF in wild boars and back-yard farms. However, the CA informed the audit team that official minutes of these meetings were not kept.

- Specific experts on particular diseases have not been identified.

5.2.8 Animal identification and movement control

For a detailed description of the animal identification, holding registration and movement control system please refer to FVO report 8259/2009. A central computerised registration database is in place for all domestic species covered by the scope of the mission. All holdings with cattle, sheep, goats, horses, poultry (including backyard holdings), must be registered, together with the number of animals present; updates are compulsory. The database contains details of the keepers and of the location of the holdings. The system is linked to a mapping system, which allows holdings to be located on a computerised map.

The number of active livestock holdings is as in the following table (as at 1 January 2013):

Species	**Number of Holdings**	**Number of animals**
Cattle	31 765	393 097
Sheep	4 408	83 632
Goats	2 893	13 329
Pigs	3 984	313 291
Horses	5 047	10 920
Poultry*	2 685	4 464 472

* Includes 13 large commercial poultry holdings (10 – laying hen holdings, 3 - broiler holdings) 93 small quantity supplier holdings with total number of poultry about 4 118 658 animals. All others are backyard poultry holdings

With respect to sheep and goats, electronic identification is not compulsory unless they are being traded outside Latvia. This is in accordance to the derogation in Article 9.3 of Regulation (EC) No. 21/2004 which provides for Member States with a population of sheep and goats of less than 160 000 to make electronic identification optional for animals not involved in intra-community trade.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- at the assembly centre visited all the calves seen were correctly identified with double ear tags;

- The central computerised identification and registration database has full forward and backward tracing functionality which can be used to control epizootic disease outbreaks and inform epidemiological investigations;

- There are no livestock markets in Latvia. There is no tradition of large numbers of animals being moved from one farm to another but those that do are traded directly from farm to farm;

- All locations where pigs are kept must be registered as a livestock holding (including pigs kept as pets)

5.2.9 Availability of Equipment

The CCA general CP contains a list of material and equipment to be kept in each TSU. In addition there are five Ministry of Interior stores of emergency equipment distributed throughout Latvia. These stores contain equipment for humane killing, mobile disinfection equipment, generators, signs for marking the boundary of protection and surveillance zones etc.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- A special kit for the investigation of the first suspect of an epizootic disease is kept in each TSU. In the TSU visited this kit was kept locked to deter staff from casually using equipment and sample material for routine work. There was also a store of sufficient protective equipment for dealing with the early stages of an epizootic outbreak.

- In the Ministry of Interior equipment store visited the material was stored in excellent conditions in a heated environment. There was no sign of corrosion or other deterioration of the equipment, some of which had been in storage for many years.

5.2.10 Vaccination policy and availability of vaccine

The procedures for deciding on whether emergency vaccination would be carried out are set out in the CCA general CP. In principle the CVO takes the decision based on the advice of the operational group and the expert team and after discussing the matter with the European Commission. The senior veterinarians in TSUs involved will have the responsibility of organising vaccination in their TSUs. Vaccination teams of 3-4 people will be established and it is anticipated that they could cover up to eight average size holdings per day. More specific information is available in the operational manuals for each disease e.g. in the case of CSF, instructions for vaccination of wild boars are in place and the measures to be put in place if emergency vaccination of domestic pigs is needed are set out. In Latvia, routine vaccination against epizootic diseases is prohibited with the exception of Newcastle Disease.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- Although the basic principles of emergency vaccination are set out in the contingency plans the CA considered that emergency vaccination would be very unlikely to be used in the Latvian situation. Consequently no detailed calculations of the numbers of doses of vaccine that would be required or where vaccine would be sourced are included in the contingency plans.

Conclusions on Contingency Plans:

Apart from the need to prepare for mass disposal of animal carcases in a way that prevents avoidable damage to the environment, the CCA general CP when considered together with the disease specific operational manuals and the local TSU contingency plans meet the requirements of Council Directive 2003/85/EC, Council Directive 2000/75/EC, Council Directive 2001/89/EC, Council Directive 2005/94/EC, Council Directive 92/66/EEC and Council Directive 2002/60/EC. Operational manuals relevant to the diseases covered by by Council Directives 92/119/EEC and 92/35/EEC are in place but have not been updated since 2004.

An expert group is in place to cover the requirements of Council Directives 2001/89/EC,

2003/85/EC and 2002/60/EC.

5.3 Preparedness and Awareness

Legal requirements:

For all epizootic diseases relevant to this audit, there is a requirement that any occurrence of the disease is notified to the CA. With the exception of AHS, notification of the European Commission is mandatory. Surveillance programmes and systems for early detection of disease are required for BT and AI. For some diseases, risk factors (e.g. Areas of high animal density, worst cases scenarios) must be identified within the CP. Specific preparedness and awareness criteria are specified for FMD; for most other relevant diseases, a communications strategy and appropriate communications training are required.

The organisation of real-time alert exercises is required for FMD and AI. Alarm drills are required for CSF and ASF.

Annex 2 to this report summarises relevant legislative requirements.

Findings:

5.3.1 Epizootic disease risk analysis and alert levels

The CA informed the audit team that formal assessments of the risks of entry of epizootic disease are not carried out in Latvia.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- at the time of the mission there was a general awareness of the risk of ASF and CSF in neighbouring countries. Live pigs were not being traded to these countries at the time of the audit but when such trade had taken place in the past there was a requirement that the empty animal transport vehicles were cleaned and disinfected at the first available location on return to Latvia;

- the veterinarian met on the pig farm visited was aware of the risk that ASF in Russia could pose to Latvia. He informed the audit team that he monitored the information provided on the Russian animal health website on the progress of the outbreak in Russia.

5.3.2 Notification requirements

Article 26 and 27 of the Veterinary Law in Latvia provides for Cabinet of Ministers Regulations. The Cabinet of Ministers Regulations 127 of 2002 (most recent update 18 September 2012) makes all the epizootic diseases in the scope of this audit notifiable.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- private veterinarians met during the on-the-spot visits were fully aware of their obligations to report suspicions of epizootic disease;

- in the poultry farm visited there had been an increase in mortality over a 24 hour period the

previous summer. The Local TSU was informed an investigation was carried out that ruled out ND and AI. The cause of the increased mortality was ascribed to a period of unusually high temperature;

- in the TSU visited the audit team examined a file on a pig farm with CSF inconclusive results to surveillance samples. The pigs were confined and movement restrictions were put in place. Further samples were taken and the farm was clinically inspected on a daily basis. Biosecurity measures, including disinfection mats at the entrances to the farm were put in place. Further samples for CSF were taken and restrictions were lifted on the confirmation of negative results.

5.3.3 Monitoring and surveillance systems

With respect to AI, in 2012 there were 895 samples taken from poultry in commercial holdings. In addition, 497 samples were taken from hens and ducks in backyard holdings. Three birds were sampled in each backyard holding. None of these samples were positive for AI. The backyard holdings for sampling were selected by the TSU taking into account risk factors (holding located close to water, free range holding, possible contact with wild birds, different species of poultry kept together, older poultry). In addition to the active monitoring scheme in domestic poultry a passive surveillance is in place for both wild birds and poultry. With respect to wild birds there is co-operation with ornithologists who are encouraged to report unusual mortality of wild birds to TSUs who will organise appropriate samples to be taken to check for AI.

A programme for surveillance for BT is in place as required by Commission Regulation (EC) No 1266/2007. In 2012 it ran from 30 March to 30 November corresponding to the vector active period. Bulk milk samples were used for checking dairy cattle (6988 cattle tested in 350 herds) and in addition cattle were also tested prior to being exported to third countries. For BT monitoring in sheep and goats blood samples taken for testing for other disease programmes were used. No sheep and goats were positive for BT.

With respect to dairy cattle herds with non-negative results to the bulk milk screening were blood tested. In total 206 animals out of of 6988 tested were positive. Seropositive herds were restricted but restrictions were lifted after further investigation of seropositive herds revealed no clinical signs of BT and no virus was detected by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) in Culicoides vectors. Further CRL laboratory work confirmed that all BT positive serum samples were BTV serotype 14 and sequencing showed a high similarity to South African BTV-14 vaccine/reference strain. Information on the seropositive cases was shared with the Commission and other countries. The episode was considered to be not an outbreak of BT but a vaccine related incident.

A CSF monitoring programme for domestic pigs and wild boars is in place. Tests are carried out on 1000 domestic pigs per year. The 1000 samples are proportioned among the 10 TSUs taking into account the pig population in each TSU. The sampling should be equally distributed throughout the year. With respect to wild boars 600 (estimated to be 1% of the population) have to be tested per year. Blood samples and organs are taken from each animal shot by hunters (the FVS pays hunters approximately €10 for each animal sampled). The number of samples is proportioned to each TSU according to the size of the wild boar population as estimated by the State Forest Service. There are more samples taken in the Eastern part of Latvia which borders Russia and Belarus. Each animal is tested for the presence of antibodies and antigen (ELISA). Following the recent CSF outbreak surveillance of wild boars has been enhanced. Forty-one sampling units of approximately 200 km^2 have been established in an infected area about 20 to 50 km wide along the border with Russia and

Belarus. For one year it is planned to sample at least 59 wild boars in each sampling unit in order to detect a prevalence of 5% at a 95% confidence level. All samples will be checked for the presence of CSF antibodies by ELISA and for CSF virus by RT-PCR. In addition, passive surveillance will be strengthened by instructing hunters and gamekeepers to report to the FVS when wild boars are found dead. With respect to domestic pig holdings levels of surveillance will be based on a clinical examination of pigs every 3 months and blood samples to be carried out every 6 months.

ASF surveillance is in place only for wild boars. The ASF tests are carried out on the same samples that are submitted for CSF. One hundred and fifty samples are serologically tested by ELISA each year from the two TSUs in the Eastern Latvia region which border Russia and Belarus.

In addition passive surveillance is in place for all epizootic diseases in Latvia. The FVS covers the costs of veterinarians performing investigations of unclear and suspected cases. The NRL also has a designated budget for epidemiological investigation which means that the owner of suspect cases does not have to pay for laboratory tests for epizootic diseases.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- in 2011 an unusually high mortality in seagulls was investigated as a potential AI or ND infection. The cause was subsequently diagnosed as poisoning due to a toxic algal bloom;
- the 2012 CSF outbreak in wild boars and backyard farms was initially detected as a result of the routine monitoring programme for CSF in wild boars;
- there have been few notifications of suspect epizootic disease cases in recent years. There was one suspect case of CSF notified in 2010 and another in 2011.
- no routine surveillance is carried out in animals routinely slaughtered in slaughterhouses.

5.3.4 Public awareness activities in "peacetime"

The CA has issued leaflets for several diseases (e.g. CSF, ASF, AI) and has that same information available also on its website.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- specific hand-outs on CSF, with details on collection of samples for laboratory analysis, and on disinfection and cleaning procedures were produced and given to hunters and veterinarians;
- a poster was also published and distributed with information on ND, AI, BT, FMD and CSF;
- several of the leaflets produced by the CA were seen available to the public in the TSU and in the pig holding visited;
- media representatives were invited to observe a recent simulation exercise and with that also helped in raising public awareness.

5.3.5 Biosecurity measures in place on animal holdings

There are no official biosecurity schemes in place in Latvia and the CA report no industry promoted schemes.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the Veterinary and Food Department of the Minister of Agriculture has started developing a Cabinet of Ministers Regulation regarding biosecurity requirements for animal holdings;

- a manual on the procedures to be used for cleaning and disinfection of animal housing following an epizootic outbreak is available on the website of the FVS. This manual includes specific information on the types of disinfectants that can be used to combat the different epizootic diseases;

- laminated leaflets using pictures to describe how staff should don protective clothing and disinfect themselves were available;

- appropriate disinfection facilities were present at the assembly centre visited;

- farms visited had biosecurity measures in place including, disinfectant mats and the requirements for persons coming into contact with animals to shower and change into supplied working clothes;

5.3.6 Staff training

The FVO audit team noted that:

- training priorities are set at central level and a yearly training plan is prepared and was made available to the audit team;

- TSUs also develop some regional level training and such a training programme was seen as well in the TSU visited;

- individual staff from CCA and TSU level attended international courses in the framework of Better Training for Safer Food (DG SANCO) from 2010 to 2012 on: contingency planning and animal disease control, killing for disease control and prevention and control of emerging animal diseases, amongst others.

- during visits to TSUs, holdings, and assembly centre the official and private veterinarians met were well informed and adequately identified initial measures to take in case of suspicion of an outbreak.

5.3.7 Simulation exercises

For information on simulation exercises carried out prior to 2009 see FVO report 8259/2009. As well as organising its own exercises, Latvia participates in exercises organised by the Nordic-Baltic Veterinary Contingency Group (NBVCG). The following table summarises the exercises that have taken place or been attended by CCA staff since 2009:

YEAR	Details of exercise
2009	International communications exercise on West Nile Fever (with NBVCG)
2010	Several table top simulation exercises in different TSUs (including FMD and CSF)
2010	Real time FMD training course in Turkey
2010	Real time FMD training course in Kenya
2010	FMD alarm drill on a cattle farm
2011	Real time FMD training course in Kenya
2011	CSF and ASF real time simulation exercise in collaboration with Germany
2011	ASF simulation exercise with NBVCG
2012	FMD simulation exercise
2012	Real time FMD training course in Kenya

The FVO audit team noted that:

- in the FMD simulation exercise carried out in 2012 approximately one tonne of pig carcases were destroyed by burning. Staff from the fire and environmental services also participated in the exercise and the exercise is being used as basis for discussions on carcase disposal with the environmental services;

- table top simulation exercises have involved the participation of several TSUs;

- an assessment of the laboratory capacity for dealing with diagnostic samples was carried out during the 2011 CSF/ASF exercise which involved cooperation with Germany;

- reports were available on the NBVCG exercises which included recommendations for improvements (e.g. in communications between the different countries) and also suggesting further exercises that could be held to test improved systems that would be introduced.

Conclusions on Preparedness and Awareness:

Satisfactory measures were taken and materials produced to raise public awareness on relevant animal disease issues. Relevant training has also been provided and both official and private veterinarians met were well informed. Regular simulation exercises have been held to train staff and private veterinarians and to identify issues to be taken into account when contingency plans are updated.

Suspicions of epizootic disease outbreaks have been dealt with in accordance with the relevant disease control directives.

5.4 Laboratories

Legal requirements:

Articles 11 and 12 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 set out requirements in relation to sampling, analysis and official laboratories, including that laboratories must be accredited to and operate in

accordance with ISO 17025.

Specific requirements relating to laboratories are laid down in the various Directives on epizootic disease control including the designation and functions of National Reference Laboratories, the tests and criteria to be applied, and the provision of adequate diagnostic capabilities and capacity. Diagnostic manuals are provided for FMD, CSF, ASF, SVD and AI (see Annex 2).

Findings:

The Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and the Environment (BIOR) is listed in the CCA general CP as the NRL for the diseases covered by the current audit. The general CP also refers to contacts in veterinary laboratories in other member states which can assist in diagnosis of difficult cases. BIOR is the only laboratory in Latvia providing laboratory diagnostics for epizootic diseases and its animal health activities are specified in Cabinet Regulation 864 of 04.08.2009 which was last amended in April 2012 to include bee health activities.

For the diagnosis of diseases cited in Directive 92/119/EEC (other than SVD and BT) samples would be sent to the Pirbright Institute in United Kingdom.

BIOR holds a double accreditation awarded by the national accreditation body (LATAK) according to the international quality standard, ISO/IEC 17025. The first accreditation accredits individual tests. The second one issues "general method"accreditation, with all individual tests based on the method being automatically accredited. All methods officially used by the laboratory for the diseases covered by the current audit were covered by the scope of one or both accreditations.

The CCA general CP indicates the maximum capacity of the laboratory and the time taken to report results. Contracts with transporters are in place for shipment of pathological specimens to other laboratories for further diagnosis when required. Instructions are also in place for TSUs regarding the preparation and shipment of samples.

BIOR participates in ring-tests and meetings organised by the respective CRLs for CSF, FMD, BT, AI, ND, SVD and ASF.

In addition to the standard operating procedures for each method, charts describing the diagnostic pathway for the confirmation of FMD, CSF and AI have been drawn up.

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the CCA general CP indicates that isolates of ND virus or AI virus would be sent to the European Union Reference Laboratory (EU-RL) in Pirbright, United Kingdom for determination of pathogenicity;

- the ELISA FMD antigen detection test is carried out in BIOR as an initial diagnosis. This test is not included in the scope of accreditation. If required FMD samples would be sent to the Pirbright Institute, the FMD EU-RL, for confirmation of diagnosis. Latvia is listed in Annex XI of Council Directive 2003/85/EC as a member state using the services of the Pirbright institute for FMD diagnosis. This cooperation has not been formalised in a mutual agreement between the CCAs of United Kingdom and Latvia as required in Article 68.2 of Council Directive 2003/85/EC;

- BIOR has not developed its own CP to up-scale capacity to deal with a large scale epizootic outbreak. However, the recent CSF outbreak prompted a revision of testing capacity due to the pressure to cope with greater than 100 CSF samples on a daily basis. An extra member of staff was recruited in the molecular biology section and extra equipment was purchased. In addition, pooling of samples to be tested by PCR (to a maximum of five) permitted a significant increase of CSF screening capacity;

- BIOR has established a table listing all the staff and their competencies which will facilitate the movement of staff with relevant experience to units needing to cope with peaks of demand for diagnostic tests to be carried out during epizootic outbreaks;

- the diagnostic pathway charts presented on the diagnosis of CSF also required ASF to be ruled out if the sample was negative for CSF,

- the recent proficiency tests for diagnosis of CSF, ASF, and AI/ND were all reported as being satisfactory with only minor deviations from expected results being identified. A recent proficiency test for FMD/SVD had also been carried out but at the time of the audit the results had not yet been reported. A previous proficiency test for FMD/SVD had been carried out in May 2011 which identified a lack of sensitivity to SAT-2 serotype on PCR. The laboratory has since changed to a primer set with increased sensitivity to SAT serotypes and is awaiting the results of the ongoing FMD/SVD proficiency test to verify that the corrective action taken has been effective.

Conclusions on Laboratories:

BIOR has the capability and capacity to diagnose the major diseases covered in the scope of this audit. If the need arises to test for RP, PPR, EHD, SGP, VS, LSD and RVF samples would be sent to the NRL in United Kingdom for diagnosis. Cooperation has not been formalised in a mutual agreement between the CCAs of United Kingdom and Latvia for diagnostic work on FMD contrary to the requirement of Article 68.2 of Council Directive 2003/85/EC.

5.5 Depopulation for epizootic disease control

Legal requirements:

Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 lays down rules for the killing of animals, including when this is performed for the purpose of depopulation. In particular, Article 18 of the Regulation requires that the stunning and killing methods planned and the corresponding standard operating procedures for ensuring compliance with the rules laid down in the Regulation shall be included in the contingency plans required under Union law on animal health, on the basis of the hypothesis established in the CP concerning the size and location of suspected outbreaks, and that, when implementing depopulation, the CA shall take any appropriate action to safeguard the welfare of the animals in the best available conditions.

Findings:

5.5.1 National legislation

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 21 of January 8, 2013 designates: the FVS as the CA with regards to Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 in general, BIOR as responsible for providing the scientific support, envisaged in Art. 20 (1) of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, for opinions on guidance developed for the purpose of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009; and the "Latvian Rural Advisor and Training Centre" as responsible for providing the training and certificates of competence required by articles 7 and 21 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009;

- CPs have not been updated yet to take into account the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009. The CCA informed the audit team that this was due to the recent CSF outbreak and the consequent need to devote resources to addressing it. Therefore there are still many points of that regulation that are not yet addressed by the existing CPs, e.g. contrary to the requirements of Art. 18 (1) no hypothesis is established in the CPs on the size and location of suspected outbreaks; the CCA has not developed the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the stunning and killing methods planned for depopulation operations that are required by Art. 18 (1); records currently used to register depopulation activities include almost all the details required by Art. 18 (4) except for the requirement to register difficulties encountered and solutions found to alleviate suffering. The CCA informed the audit team that it expects to finish this updating by 30/06/2013;

- with Order 142 of 20/8/2004 (lastly amended by Order 103 of 15/10/2012) the CCA issued "Guidelines for humane animal killing". These guidelines contain some useful information and guidance for staff involved in killing for depopulation (e.g. identification of advantages and disadvantages of some killing methods, species to which particular methods are recommended, etc.) but are not detailed enough to ensure compliance with all the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 namely with regards to: the key parameters identified in its Annex I – the standard operating procedures for stunning and killing methods and the training requirements for staff carrying out the stunning and killing;

- the CCA has organised some information and training sessions for both operators and officials in 2011 and 2012 on the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009. Nevertheless, the training and certificates of competence for personnel involved in killing and related operations required by Art. 7 and 21 has not yet been implemented but the CCA has recently been contacted by the "Latvian Rural Advisor and Training Centre" in order to discuss that training programme.

5.5.2 Methods of killing and availability of equipment

The FVO audit team noted that:

- the NDCC after evaluation of an outbreak's details and circumstances, provided by the LDCC, would make the decision about which killing method to use during an outbreak. However, the killing methods mentioned in the "Guidelines for Humane Killing" do not indicate a respective maximum kill rate which would provide the necessary support for granting the possible derogations to some provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, as envisaged in its Art. 18 (3);

- one of the FVS storage locations was visited and a penetrative captive bolt pistol (with respective cartridges for different weights/size animals) and electric tongs and generator were available. An instructions manual for the use of the electric tongs was also present

however for the captive bolt pistol the instructions on site were not available in Latvian;

- the CCA first initiated discussions with a company to provide carbon dioxide for depopulation in 2009. However, the proposal made by the company at that time was a generic contract that did not fulfil the CCA requirements and discussions were stopped. Negotiations have been re-started with this same company and the contract should now include provisions for equipment rental, staff and so on. These negotiations are now expected to be concluded, and a contract signed, in August 2013;

- the TSU CPs are supposed to address the requirement of Art. 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 that persons carrying out killing and related operations are provided with the level of competence, and corresponding certificate, to do so without causing any avoidable pain, distress or suffering. However, in the three TSUs visited no such qualified staff had been identified in the CP;

- the CCA informed the audit team that in the case of the recent CSF outbreak official veterinarians from the CCA and TSUs performed the killing themselves with penetrative captive bolt pistol. The outbreak only required depopulation of a total of 16 domestic pigs kept for private consumption;

- all the equipment and logistical support that might be required in case of a large scale outbreak would be provided via the regional County Civil Defence Committee.

Conclusions on depopulation for epizootic disease control:

The requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 have not been incorporated yet into the existing CPs and the killing methods currently prescribed and guidance in place are also not in line with the requirements of that regulation.

Some killing equipment is permanently available in storage that would allow starting depopulation of mammals within a relatively short time frame. However, there is as yet no contract in place to ensure the same with regards to poultry depopulation.

5.6 Disposal of carcasses

Legal requirements:

Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 and Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 lay down health rules for animal by-products (ABP) and derived products, in order to prevent and minimise risks to public and animal health. In particular, Articles 12 and 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 specify the disposal routes for animals and parts of animals killed for disease control purposes. By way of derogation from these rules, Article 19(1)(e) of this Regulation allows the disposal of these ABP by burning or burial on site. Article 15(a) of Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 sets out the special rules to be followed in case this derogation is used.

In relation to FMD controls, Directive 2003/85/EC (Article 72 (1), (4) and (5) and Annex XVII Points 13 and 14) requires that the means of disposal of carcasses and animal waste does not cause environmental damage and that appropriate sites and undertakings for the treatment or disposal of animal carcasses and animal waste be identified in the CP.

Findings:

The FVO audit team noted that:

- There is a contract in place with a rendering plant to collect and process animal carcasses in case of an outbreak. However, the rendering plant is processing only category 3 materials and would need a few days to adapt to processing carcasses of diseased animals which would be category 1 or category 2 material. In addition its current rendering capacity is of approximately 40 tons per day and that would be insufficient in case of a major outbreak. Therefore, the preferred option for carcass disposal is burning on site or, alternatively, burial. The CCA has initiated discussions with the Environmental Services on environmental requirements for burning and/or deep burial of animal carcases in case of an outbreak. However, this is legally a highly complex situation for which no solutions have yet been found.

- The TSU CPs contain a section for listing approved burning/burial sites but no such sites had been approved yet in any of the three TSUs visited.

Conclusions on disposal of carcasses:

In the absence of sufficient rendering capacity burning or burial on site is the only realistic route for disposal of animal carcasses from depopulation due to a major outbreak. However, the fact that no sites have been approved for that purpose indicates a potential for environmental damage following disposal of carcases in case a major outbreak occurs. This is not in compliance with the relevant requirements laid down by Directive 2003/85/EC concerning FMD, or the requirements laid down by Article 19(1)(e) of Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 and Article 15(a) of Regulation (EU) No 142/2011, which concern outbreaks of any epizootic disease.

6 Overall Conclusions

A general CP for dealing with outbreaks of all types of epizootic disease is in place. The general plan is supported by disease specific operational manuals which give targeted instructions on how to control each disease. Command and control structures for dealing with epizootic disease outbreaks are defined at both central and local levels with the possibility to use national government and regional government crisis committees if the need arises. Simulation exercises in dealing with epizootic disease take place on a regular basis and many of them involve cooperation with other countries under the auspices of the NBVCG.

However, in a major outbreak there would be insufficient animal by-product processing capacity to deal with carcase disposal. In addition, sites for burning and deep burial have not been agreed with the environmental authorities.

Contingency plans have not yet incorporated the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 and the killing methods currently prescribed and guidance in place are not fully in line with the requirements of that Regulation.

In relation to the fact finding elements of the mission the audit team found that formal risk assessments for epizootic diseases were not in place but there was a good level of awareness of the current epizootic threats amongst the stakeholders met. Although formal biosecurity schemes are not in place, sites visited by the audit team had appropriate levels of biosecurity.

7 Closing Meeting

A closing meeting was held on 8 March 2013 with representatives of the CCA. At this meeting, the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the audit were presented by the audit team. The representatives of the CCA did not indicate any major disagreement with the findings and preliminary conclusions.

8 Recommendations

The CCA is invited to provide details of the actions taken and planned, including deadlines for their completion ('action plan'), within one month after receipt of the report, aimed at addressing the recommendations set out below

N°.	Recommendation
1.	The CCA should, in cooperation with the environmental authorities identify sites that can be used, in case of an outbreak of epizootic disease, for deep burial or burning of carcases as required by Council Directive 2003/85(Article 72 (1), (4) and (5) and Annex XVII Points 13 and 14) and Article 15(a) of Regulation (EU) No 142/2011.
2.	The CCA should formalise an agreement with the United Kingdom CCA in relation to diagnostic work on FMD to be carried out at the EU-RL as required in Article 68.2 of Council Directive 2003/85/EC.
3.	The CCA should ensure that the contingency plans establish an hypothesis concerning the size and location of suspected outbreaks in order to be able to determine the stunning and killing methods and procedures required by Art. 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009.
4.	The CCA should ensure that the contingency plans, with the respective operational manuals and guidelines, are updated to include the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 as required by its Art. 18 (1).
5.	The CCA should ensure that estimated maximum kill rates for the proposed methods for depopulation are available, so that it can be properly informed to determine when derogations to one or more provisions to Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 should be granted due to exceptional circumstances, as allowed by its Art. 18 (3).
6.	The CCA should ensure that standard operating procedures, with the stunning and killing methods planned, ensuring compliance with the rules laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009, are drafted and included in all relevant contingency plans as required by its Art. 18 (1).
7.	The CCA should ensure that records to be used to register depopulation activities also report the difficulties encountered and solutions found to alleviate or minimise the suffering of the animals as required by Art. 18 (4) of Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009.

The competent authority's response to the recommendations can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2013-6777

Annex 1 - Legal References

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
Dir. 92/66/EEC	OJ L 260, 5.9.1992, p. 1-20	Council Directive 92/66/EEC of 14 July 1992 introducing Community measures for the control of Newcastle disease
Dir. 92/35/EEC	OJ L 157, 10.6.1992, p. 19-27	Council Directive 92/35/EEC of 29 April 1992 laying down control rules and measures to combat African horse sickness
Dir. 92/119/EEC	OJ L 62, 15.3.1993, p. 69-85	Council Directive 92/119/EEC of 17 December 1992 introducing general Community measures for the control of certain animal diseases and specific measures relating to swine vesicular disease
Dir. 2000/75/EC	OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 74-83	Council Directive 2000/75/EC of 20 November 2000 laying down specific provisions for the control and eradication of bluetongue
Dir. 2001/89/EC	OJ L 316, 1.12.2001, p. 5-35	Council Directive 2001/89/EC of 23 October 2001 on Community measures for the control of classical swine fever
Dir. 2002/60/EC	OJ L 192, 20.7.2002, p. 27-46	Council Directive 2002/60/EC of 27 June 2002 laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever
Dir. 2003/85/EC	OJ L 306, 22.11.2003, p. 1-87	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
Dir. 2005/94/EC	OJ L 10, 14.1.2006, p. 16-65	Council Directive 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC
Dir. 2008/71/EC	OJ L 213, 8.8.2008, p. 31-36	Council Directive 2008/71/EC of 15 July 2008 on the identification and registration of pigs (Codified version)

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
Dec. 91/42/EEC	OJ L 23, 29.1.1991, p. 29-30	91/42/EEC: Commission Decision of 8 January 1991 laying down the criteria to be applied when drawing up contingency plans for the control of foot-and-mouth disease, in application of Article 5 of Council Directive 90/423/EEC
Reg. 1760/2000	OJ L 204, 11.8.2000, p. 1-10	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
Reg. 21/2004	OJ L 5, 9.1.2004, p. 8-17	Council Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 of 17 December 2003 establishing a system for the identification and registration of ovine and caprine animals and amending Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003 and Directives 92/102/EEC and 64/432/EEC
Reg. 882/2004	OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1, Corrected and re-published in OJ L 191, 28.5.2004, p. 1	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
Reg. 1069/2009	OJ L 300, 14.11.2009, p. 1-33	Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 (Animal by-products Regulation)
Reg. 1099/2009	OJ L 303, 18.11.2009, p. 1-30	Council Regulation (EC) No 1099/2009 of 24 September 2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
Reg. 142/2011	OJ L 54, 26.2.2011, p. 1-254	Commission Regulation (EU) No 142/2011 of 25 February 2011 implementing Regulation (EC) No 1069/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down health rules as regards animal by-products and derived products not intended for human consumption and implementing Council Directive 97/78/EC as regards certain samples and items exempt from veterinary checks at the border under that Directive