FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN SLOVAKIA
FROM 15 TO 19 OCTOBER 2001
CONCERNING FOOD PRODUCTION

(POULTRY MEAT, POULTRY MEAT PRODUCTS, LIVE POULTRY AND HATCHING EGGS)

Please note that certain amendments based on the comments from the Authorities from Slovakia have been included in the text of the report in bold, italic type.
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<td>AHD</td>
<td>Animal Health Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Avian Influenza</td>
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<td>CA</td>
<td>Competent Authority</td>
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<td>CCA</td>
<td>Central Competent Authority</td>
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<td>CRL</td>
<td>Community Reference Laboratory</td>
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<td>DVA</td>
<td>District Veterinary Administration</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>ELISA</td>
<td>Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay</td>
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<td>FVO</td>
<td>Food and Veterinary Office</td>
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<td>HACCP</td>
<td>Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point</td>
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<td>HI</td>
<td>Haemo-agglutination Inhibition</td>
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<td>ICPI</td>
<td>Intracerebral pathogenicity index</td>
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<td>IVPI</td>
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<td>ND</td>
<td>Newcastle Disease</td>
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<td>OIE</td>
<td>Office International des Epizooties</td>
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<td>OV</td>
<td>Official Veterinarian</td>
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<td>PVS</td>
<td>Private Veterinary Surgeon</td>
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<td>RVA</td>
<td>Regional Veterinary Administration</td>
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<td>SNAS</td>
<td>Slovak National Accreditation Service</td>
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<td>SR</td>
<td>Slovak Republic</td>
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<td>SVA</td>
<td>State Veterinary Administration</td>
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<td>SVI</td>
<td>State Veterinary Institute</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

The mission took place in the Slovak Republic (SR) from 15/10/01 to 19/10/01. The inspection team comprised two officials of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and one national expert of one of the Member State. Representatives from the central and local authorities accompanied the team during the mission.

An opening meeting was held on 15 October 2001 with the Central Competent Authorities (CCA) in Bratislava. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the mission were discussed and confirmed by the inspection team and additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the mission was requested.

2. **OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION**

   The main objective was to assess the system the Competent Authority (CA) have in place to assure that the relevant EC requirements in relation to export to EU of fresh poultry meat, poultry meat products and live poultry and hatching eggs are met.

   The mission intended to cover the following sectors or aspects thereof:

   - Poultry meat establishments, amongst other issues focussing on the approval procedures, veterinary supervision and slaughter hygiene
   - Poultry meat product establishments, in particular when these are combined with the poultry slaughterhouses
   - The animal health status of poultry, in particular monitoring and control of Newcastle disease and avian influenza.

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

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<th>COMPETENT AUTHORITY OFFICES</th>
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<th>LABORATORY</th>
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<th>LIVE ANIMAL HOLDINGS</th>
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<td>Meat products plant</td>
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<td>Slaughterhouses/ Cutting premises</td>
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3. **LEGAL BASIS FOR THE MISSION**

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

– Council Directive 90/539/EEC on animal health conditions governing intra-Community trade in and imports from third countries of poultry and hatching eggs\(^3\);


– Council Directive 92/118/EEC laying down animal health and public health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community of products not subject to the said requirements laid down in specific Community rules referred to in Annex A (I) to 89/662/EEC and, as regards pathogens, to Directive 90/425/EEC\(^5\);


– Commission Decision 98/140/EC laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in third countries\(^7\).

In addition, certain aspects of the following legislation were taken into account during the mission:

– 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\(^8\);

– Commission Decision 93/342/EEC, of 12 May 1993, laying down the criteria for classifying third countries with regard to avian influenza and Newcastle disease in relation to imports of live poultry and hatching eggs\(^9\);

– Commission Decision 94/438/EC, of 7 June 1994, laying down the criteria for classifying third countries and parts thereof with regard to avian influenza and

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\(^1\) OJ No L 55 of 8.03.1971, p. 23
\(^2\) OJ No L 62 of 15.03.1993, p. 1
\(^3\) OJ No L 303 of 31.10.90, p. 6
\(^4\) OJ No L 268 of 24.9.1991, p. 35
\(^5\) OJ No L 62 of 15.03.1993, p. 49
\(^6\) OJ No L 340 of 31.12.1993, p. 21
\(^7\) OJ No L 38 of 12.02.1998, p. 14
\(^8\) OJ No L 26 of 31.1.1977, p. 85
\(^9\) OJ No L 137 of 8.6.1993, p. 24
Newcastle disease in relation to imports of fresh poultry meat and amending Decision 93/342/EEC\(^{10}\);

- Commission Decision 94/984/EC, of 20 December 1994, laying down animal health conditions and veterinary certificates for the importation of fresh poultry meat from certain third countries\(^{11}\);

- Commission Decision 96/482/EC, of 12 July 1996, laying down animal health conditions and veterinary certificates for the importation of poultry and hatching eggs other than ratites and eggs thereof from third countries including animal health measures to be applied after such importation\(^{12}\).

4. **BACKGROUND OF THE MISSION**

4.1. **Background to present mission**

The Slovak Republic is listed in:

- Commission Decision 94/85/EC\(^{13}\) drawing up a list of third countries from which the Member States authorise imports of fresh poultry meat;

- Commission Decision 94/984/EC\(^{14}\) laying down animal health conditions for the importation of fresh poultry meat from third countries;

- Commission Decision 95/233/EC\(^{15}\) drawing up a list of third countries from which the Member States authorise imports of live poultry and hatching eggs;

- Commission Decision 96/483/EC\(^{16}\) drawing up the list of third countries entitled to use the model animal health certificates for imports in to the Community of live poultry and hatching eggs other than ratites and eggs thereof as laid down by Decision 96/482/EC;

- Commission Decision 97/222/EC\(^{17}\) drawing up a list of third countries from which the Member States authorise imports of meat products;

Currently there are two fresh poultry meat establishments (slaughterhouse with integrated cutting section,) approved for export to the European Union (EU) in accordance with Article 14 of Directive 71/118/EEC (Commission Decision 97/4/EC\(^{18}\)). Two independent processing plants (poultry meat

\(^{10}\) OJ No L 181 of 7.6.1994, p. 35

\(^{11}\) OJ No L 185 of 4.8.1995, p. 50


\(^{13}\) OJ No L 44 of 17.2.1994, p. 31

\(^{14}\) OJ No. L 378 of 31.12.1994, p. 11

\(^{15}\) OJ No. L 156 of 7.7.1997, p. 76

\(^{16}\) OJ No L 282 of 1.11.1996, p. 73

\(^{17}\) OJ No. L 98 of 4.4.1997, p. 39

\(^{18}\) OJ No L 2 of 4.1.1997, p. 6
products establishments) have been approved for export to the EU (Commission Decision 98/220/EC as amended by fax n. SANCO/07016 of 28/05/2001).

The FVO is currently carrying out a series of missions to the third countries exporting fresh poultry meat, poultry meat products, live poultry and hatching eggs to the Community.

This mission is included in this mission series.

Two veterinary missions to SR for different items have been carried out recently:

DG(SANCO)/1070/2000 – rabbit, farmed and wild game meat,

DG(SANCO)/3202/2001 – milk, rabbit, farmed and wild game meat.

The reports of these missions are, or will be, available on the Internet site at http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/index_en.html

4.2. Production and trade information

In 2000 about 284 tonnes of poultry meat and about 30 tonnes of canned meat and poultry meat products were imported into SR.

A total of about 480 tonnes of poultry meat and 692 kg of poultry meat products were imported in the first part of the 2001 into SR.

A total of about 157 tonnes of fresh poultry meat were exported to the Community in 2001 (from January to June)

5. Description of the system and main findings

5.1. Legal basis in the national legislation

Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 337/1998 on veterinary care

Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic No. 468/2001-100 by which the details on general and special hygienic conditions for individual establishment and facility types are laid down

Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic No. 678/2001-100 on requirements to ensure food safety and wholesomeness of animal products

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19 OJ No L 82 of 19.03.1998, p. 47

20 General remark: the legal basis in the national legislation and the descriptions of the systems in place have been drafted on the basis of information provided, either before or during the mission, by the CCA. The findings were noted in the sites visited. Not all the findings were noted in each site.
Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 152/1995 on foodstuffs

Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 70/2000 Coll. II.


Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic of 26 March 2001, No. 640/2001-100 by which the details on protection of the state territory are governed.


Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic No. 28/2001/2-100


Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic No. 79/1997 on measures to prevent the contagious diseases.


STN 57 7111 Quality of water.

Decree of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Slovak Republic No. 467/201-100 of 26 March 2001: measures aimed at the prevention, control and eradication of poultry disease.

5.2. **Competent authorities performance**

5.2.1. *Structure of the central competent authority*

The CCA is the State Veterinary Administration (SVA) that forms part of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Detailed descriptions of the Competent Authorities (CA) can be found in the reports from the previous missions mentioned above and are still valid. However, it is useful to briefly recall that structure here.

The central office of SVA is under the responsibility of the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), who is appointed by, and responds directly to, the Minister of Agriculture.

The CA has a pyramidal structure:

State Veterinary Administration (SVA)
Regional Veterinary Administrations (RVA)

District Veterinary Administrations (DVA)

Their tasks are defined in the Veterinary Act 337/1998.

The country is divided into 8 veterinary regions each comprising several veterinary districts: in total there are 40 districts. The RVA and the DVA are staffed by full time official veterinarians (OVs): 35 at regional level and 565 at district level. In the establishments approved for export to EU there is at least one OV permanently present.

At central level there are 90 veterinarians employed, including employees of the Border Inspection Posts. The CVO in the headquarters appoints the CVO in the regions and districts.

The following future plans were explained to the inspection team:

- A new Veterinary Act is being drafted that will allow completion of transposition of EU legislation into Slovak legislation.

- A new Authority is being created that will ensure control of the whole food chain (except for fruits and wine). It was stated that it may be operational in 2002.

The SVA, on the basis of the instruction No. 1156/01-220, dated 17 July 2001, extended the power of the private veterinary surgeons (PVS) to perform the ante-mortem inspection of poultry. The PVS is authorised by the competent DVA to perform some official tasks, e.g.:

- ante-mortem inspection at farm level,
- vaccinations,
- sampling to verify the efficacy of the vaccination against Newcastle disease (ND),
- sampling for the control of *Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum*, *Salmonella spp.* and *Mycoplasma spp.* etc.

A monthly meeting is organised by the district veterinarians to co-ordinate the activity of the PVSs. The PVS has to send a report on his activity to the DVA.

The official activity of the PVS has to be supervised by the DVA and a report (standard statement) on this supervision has to be sent to the RVA.

5.2.2. Findings

- Documentary evidence of co-ordination between central, regional and district levels was found. However, some deficiencies concerning the supervision by the different levels, in particular in regard to animal health, were found (see also point 5.5.2).

- Guidelines in regard to different items, in particular to harmonise veterinary supervision, have been issued by the CCA and copies were available at regional and district levels. However, the veterinary
supervision by the different levels is not always effective as seen in the establishments visited (see also point 5.7.3.2).

- Documentary evidence (standard report form) that the RVA supervises the performance of the district veterinarians was seen.

- A list of the PVS authorised by the DVA was available both at regional and district level, as well as the official letters authorising each PVS to carry out official tasks. Nevertheless, the PVS, also when carrying out official tasks, is paid by the farm’s owner.

- Although guidelines to perform the supervision of the activity of the PVS have been issued by the CCA, evidence was not always found that the district veterinarian supervises the performances of the PVS. Only in one of the two regions visited reports on the activity of the PVS were available.

5.3. Laboratories service

5.3.1. Description of the system

The six State Veterinary Laboratories (SVI), established by the Ministry of Agriculture, are under the direct supervision of the SVA. The Director of each laboratory is appointed by the CVO. The laboratory network covers the whole territory. All the laboratories are financed from the State budget.

These laboratories are all approved by the SVA.

The SVA has also approved one private laboratory (with competence for one DVA).

The other private laboratories examine only samples taken by producers in the framework of their own check programme.

The Slovak National Accreditation Service (SNAS) controls the activity of the accredited laboratories.

The SNAS is the accreditation authority appointed by the Ministry of Economy.

The SVI in Nitra acts as national reference laboratory for avian influenza (AI) and Newcastle disease (ND), and as regional laboratory for *Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum* and *Mycoplasma* spp. All the samples taken for diagnosis and control of avian influenza (AI) and ND are sent to the SVI.

The regional laboratories are able to perform serological and bacteriological tests for *Salmonella* spp. and *Mycoplasma* spp. However, the regional laboratories in general are not able to perform all the sero-typing of *Salmonella* spp. When they are not able to sero-type the isolates, they send them to the SVI in Bratislava.

The SVI in Nitra is composed of 5 Departments with different sections. The mission team visited the microbiological and virological/serological sections of the Animal Health Department (AHD). These sections are not yet accredited.
52 people are employed in the AHD and 11 of them are employed in the virological/serological section.

The staff of the virological/serological section (laboratory) has produced an internal manual where are described the methods of laboratory diagnosis of AI and ND that are in line with the OIE (Office International des Epizooties) Manual of Standards (1996) for diagnostic tests.

In particular, the Haemo-agglutination Inhibition (HI) test is used to verify efficacy of the vaccination against ND and Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) test is used for the serological control of the breeder flocks for AI (see also point 5.5.2).

The definition of AI and ND, based on the OIE definition, is included in this internal manual (see also point 5.5.2).

5.3.2. Findings

- The SVI has attended the reference laboratories meetings for AI and ND for the past two years, but it has not taken part in comparative ring tests for ND and AI organised by the Community Reference Laboratory (CRL) of Weybridge.

- The SVI has no high bio-security unit. SPF eggs imported from other countries are available to perform tests.

- The mission team was informed that the SVI, due to a lack of financial resources, from 1999 until October 2001, had no reagents and reference sera against AI. However, during the visit evidence was seen that the sera would be received from CRL of Weybridge in a short time.

- Due to lack of time it was not possible to verify if the virological/serological section of the SVI is able to perform the intracerebral pathogenicity index (ICPI) for ND virus and the intravenous pathogenicity index (IVPI) for AI.

- The registration system in place (reception of the samples, registration of the results samples, etc) is based on electronic systems combined with paper support.

- The laboratory receives mainly official samples but also private samples from the industry.

- Records of the results of the analysis performed by the laboratory were available (see also point 5.5.3).

- The laboratory sends the results of the tests carried out to the competent DVA and to the owner or to the PVS who has taken and sent the samples.

- The mission team was informed that, once per year, the SVI sends the results of the tests carried out to verify the efficacy of the vaccination against ND to the CCA, but no copy of these were available at central level.
• Records of the results of the microbiological analysis carried out for *Salmonella* spp. were available.

• Copies of the annual activity reports of the SVI were available.

5.4. **Veterinary legislation**

Veterinary legislation is mainly covered by the Act on Veterinary Care, in force since January 1999 and the respective Regulations for its execution (decree or edicts), the Act on Foods, some chapters of the Food Codex and the Act on feeding-stuffs.

In regard to the legislation concerning poultry, only some Regulations were available in English. It has not been possible to verify if all provisions relating to export of live poultry and meat to EU are in line with the relevant Community legislation. Where appropriate, discrepancies are mentioned under the findings in the different sections of this report.

5.5. **Animal health controls**

5.5.1. *Description of the supervision*

The district CA carries out the veterinary supervision in poultry farms.

There was no occurrence of poultry diseases listed in OIE List A in the last 3 years.

In fattening flocks the vaccination against ND, infectious bursal disease and infectious bronchitis is carried out.

In breeders flocks vaccination against ND, encephalomyelitis, infectious anaemia, infectious bursal disease, infectious bronchitis and reo-viral infections are carried out.

The vaccines used are either produced in SR or imported. The Drug and Biological Control Institute in Nitra controls the production and distribution of the vaccines.

**AI and ND**

The current situation in regard to these two poultry diseases, notifiable under SR legislation, is the following:

- AI never occurred in SR;
- The last outbreak of ND occurred in 1980.

The definition of AI and ND is not mentioned in the national legislation but only in the manual produced by the National Reference Laboratory (see point 5.3.1).

In SR vaccination against ND is compulsory for industrial flocks of poultry breeders and recommended, on the basis of the epidemiological situation, for laying hens (table eggs) and for fattening flocks. There are no vaccination
programmes for ND approved by the CA to apply to the breeder flocks. Each farmer decides the programme to apply.

For the backyard flocks the vaccination against ND has to be decided by the competent DVA. Both live and inactivated ND vaccines used are prepared from a lentogenic La Sota strain.

ND surveillance is on the basis of clinical/anatomo-pathological suspicions and testing for the efficacy of the vaccination: the latter is mandatory in poultry breeders.

The laboratory diagnosis methods for AI and ND are in line with the OIE Manual of Standards (1996) for diagnostic tests.

Based on the Act on Veterinary Care, each person has to notify the occurrence of contagious diseases to the DVA that, in a monthly report, notifies the required data to the SVA. The suspicion of OIE list A diseases has to be immediately notified by the DVA to the SVA.

Vaccination against AI has never been used and vaccines have never been produced or imported in SR.

Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum, Salmonella spp. and Mycoplasma spp.

Salmonella gallinarum, Salmonella pullorum diseases, avian salmonellosis and mycoplasmoses are notifiable diseases.

A control programme for the above-mentioned diseases is in place. The control programme is based on clinical/anatomo-pathological examinations, serological and bacteriological tests. The SVI competent for the territory performs the tests. In case of isolation of Salmonella spp. the competent SVI is able to serotype only some strains (see also point 5.3.1). All the other strains have to be sent to the SVI in Bratislava that acts as national reference laboratory for Salmonella spp.

In case of positive results for Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum the breeder flock has to be eliminated.

The breeder flocks are vaccinated with inactived vaccine against Salmonella enteritidis and then the efficacy of the vaccination is verified.

5.5.2. Findings

A list of poultry farms and hatcheries was available at central, regional and district levels. However, in the list available at central level, neither the species (chicken, turkey etc.) nor the commercial destination (breeders, laying hens or fattening flock etc.) was given. A list of poultry backyard flocks was not available.

Only the two farms approved, on the basis of the EC requirements, for export to EU have an approval number. The file of the approval procedure was available at central level.

Documentary evidence was seen that, twice per year, the district OV inspects farms and hatcheries.
A standard checklist is used by the OV in order to verify the bio-security measures in place, the health conditions of the flocks and movements of the birds. Each movement has to be accompanied by a transport certificate signed by the PVS.

However, the routine control of farms is carried out by the PVS, who has to take all the official samples.

In the breeder farm visited, flock records were available.

**AI and ND**

- Vaccination against ND is carried out by the PVS. He takes also samples to test the immune status of the birds vaccinated. All the samples are sent to the SVI in Nitra. The laboratory sends copy of the results to the owner/PVS and to the DVA.

- In the breeder farm visited, records of the vaccination, of the serological samples taken to test the efficacy of the vaccination and of the results of the analysis was available, but the system of recording does not allow easy verification of the frequency of these interventions.

- In the farm visited evidence was found that the district OV supervises the vaccination and sampling carried out by the PVS and the results of the tests.

- No documentary evidence was found that the RVA or the SVA supervise the vaccination, the results of the serological analysis or their frequency.

- No information was available in regard to the vaccination against ND and its control in backyard flocks.

- The surveillance for AI is on the basis of clinical and/or anatomo-pathological suspicion only. However, from August 2001, the SVA, on the basis of a request made by the WHO\(^{21}\), has put in place a serological screening programme for AI in poultry breeders. Some results already available in the SVI in Nitra were negative.

- In case of AI or ND outbreaks, the national legislation foresees the application of stamping-out of the flocks but the compensation paid by the Government to the owner is only 20% of the total value of the flock.

- A record of the total doses of vaccine used each year in the whole country is not available at central level.

*Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum, Salmonella spp, and Mycoplasma spp.*

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\(^{21}\) The WHO organises random monitoring for influenza in different countries in order to obtain an overview of the global spread of the virus.
• Guidelines have been issued by the CCA for the control of the above-mentioned pathogens and the Government pays for the analysis of the official samples.

• In breeder farms and hatcheries, all samples for serological examination and for bacteriological control for *Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum*, *Salmonella spp.;* and *Mycoplasma spp.* are taken by the PVS.

• A standard form is completed by the PVS when samples for serological examination (slow agglutination reaction) and for bacteriological control are sent to the SVI competent for the territory. The laboratory sends a copy of the results to the owner/PVS and to the DVA.

• In the farm visited records of the samples taken and their results were available, but the system of recording does not allow easy verification of the frequency of sampling.

• In the farm visited, evidence was found that the OV supervises the sampling carried out by the PVS and the results of the tests.

• At regional or central levels, a record of the total number of samples taken and the results of the analysis performed by each district, was not available.

5.6. **Veterinary supervision at the time of slaughter regarding animal welfare**

5.6.1. *Description of the system of supervision*

An OV designated by the DVA has to perform the supervision at the time of slaughter regarding animal welfare in the slaughterhouse. He checks the accompanying documents, the identification and physical conditions of the animals, the unloading of poultry and their handling, the number of dead animals. In addition he checks stunning (compliance with the prescribed parameters for stunning) and its efficiency, time from stunning to bleeding and in case of failure of the automatic line, the immediate killing of stunned animals.

5.6.2. *Findings*

• The lairaging conditions were not satisfactory in one of the establishments visited. No facilities were provided to protect waiting birds against climatic conditions.

• No documentary evidence was found that the OV supervised the animal welfare conditions of birds on arrival.

• In one establishment, the hanging of the birds was done in an unsuitable area (too bright leading to increase excitation).

• In one establishment, the distance between stunning and bleeding was too short, and it was not possible to access the area to check stunned birds.
Evidence was found that the OV supervised the stunning of the birds. However, in one establishment, the stunning of the birds was not satisfactory. Most still showed corneal reflexes and gasping during bleeding, which was due to a problem in the control of the parameters.

5.7. Food safety controls

5.7.1. Veterinary supervision of poultry farms

5.7.1.1. Description of the system of supervision

The relevant national legal basis describes the system of supervision.

There is an obligation to keep records on the information necessary for permanent poultry health status control. This control is based on daily records of poultry status, deaths, diagnoses by the PVS and results from laboratory examination.

In fattening farms it is compulsory to take samples for the control of *Salmonella spp.* before sending the birds to the slaughterhouse.

5.7.1.2. Findings

- Documentary evidence was found that the farms are under supervision by the OV from DVA. However, the frequency and objectives of the visits, as well as the reports produced in different districts, were not uniform. There are no harmonised instructions for veterinary supervision of poultry farms issued either by the central or regional authorities.

- In one DVA visited, documentary evidence of the supervision of the PVS by DVA was not completely available and not sufficiently detailed.

- The flock records were not uniform in the poultry farms visited and in one farm were not kept for the last two years.

- In the farm where the flock records were kept, they did not fulfil all the requirements of Directive 71/118/EEC. Some elements were missing. In particular, types of medicinal products, with dates of administration and withdrawal given to the birds, were not always recorded in the documentation on the farm.

- Documentary evidence was found that commercial flocks, before despatch to the slaughterhouse, are controlled for the presence of *Salmonella spp.*

- Harmonised instructions for *Salmonella spp.* sampling (faecal samples) have been issued by the CCA and were available at district level.

5.7.2. Approval procedures for poultry meat and poultry meat product establishments

5.7.2.1. Description of the different steps of the approval procedures

The establishments have to apply to the CCA (SVA) for approval, or renewal of existing approval in case of important alterations. Once the
requirements for approval for export to the EU are fulfilled, the establishments ask the respective DVAs to perform checks over the fulfilment of the conditions set by the SVA. The DVA performs these controls, processes the report on the inspection, which recommends approval for export into the EU and sends the report to the SVA.

The subsequent control is performed by the SVA. If all requirements specified in the respective EU legislation are fulfilled, the SVA recommends the Commission Services to include the establishment in the preliminary list of establishments approved for export to the EU.

If some deficiencies are found during the control performed by the SVA, a timetable to rectify the deficiencies is fixed. The DVA controls its fulfilment. After the rectification of the deficiencies, a new inspection is carried out by the SVA, and the establishment can be proposed for inclusion in the list of establishments approved for export to the EU.

5.7.2.2. Findings

- This new approval procedure was implemented from April 2001. No new establishments have been approved since the change of the procedure. However, on the basis of the new legislation, all the establishments approved under the previous procedure had to be inspected in order to verify that they fulfilled the requirements of national or EC legislation (for the establishments approved for export to the EU).

- Documentary evidence was seen that the establishments approved for export to EU had been inspected in 2001 by the different CA, and a new approval certificate issued in case of important changes (e.g. name of the plant, a new owner, significant structural alterations). However, in one of the plants visited, the mission team found a severe shortcoming (see point 5.7.4.1).

- Although a new approval certificate was issued by the CCA for the establishments visited by the mission team, the new approval procedure was not followed in all the establishments visited.

- The registration files, including blueprints, were available in the establishments and at District level.

5.7.3. Veterinary supervision of establishments

5.7.3.1. Description of the different levels and types of supervision:

The CA performs veterinary supervision on the basis of Act No. 337/1998 Coll. ll. in slaughterhouses and in facilities and establishments for processing of meat of slaughtered animals.

Veterinary controls are performed by the OV and qualified veterinary employees of the veterinary authorities on animal products, as well as the conditions of their obtaining, manufacturing, processing, handling, storing and placing on the market.

The DVA is obliged, within its competencies, apart from other duties, to ensure:
• permanent veterinary control in slaughterhouses during slaughtering;
• veterinary control: during operations in approved cutting plants for poultry meat;
• regular veterinary control: during the storage of poultry meat in cold stores, in approved establishments for manufacturing of meat products, in approved canning plants during the production of food of animal origin, during the obtaining, manufacturing or handling of other foods of animal origin and their components, at the place of shipment of exported, or at the place of destination of imported, consignments of goods subject to veterinary control.

The OV carries out the veterinary inspection of slaughter animals and meat, and the control of cutting and handling. Either veterinary auxiliaries with relevant qualifications, or other person who have obtained the qualification for performance of special veterinary activities, may perform the practical operations within the framework of inspection and control under OV supervision and responsibility.

Inspection activity is carried out according to the instructions from the CCA in establishments approved for the export into the EU.

The OV appointed by the district of the establishment approved for export to the EU of poultry meat, has to produce a monthly report on his activity. Quarterly, an OV from the DVA, in presence of the OV of the establishment, carries out an inspection of the establishment and of the related documents. A report of this supervisory visit has to be sent to the RVA and SVA for central registration. The same procedure is followed by the RVA who supervises the activity of the OV of the DVA and of the OV of the establishment, twice per year. A report of this supervisory visit has to be sent to the SVA for central registration.

The OV from the SVA has to supervise the activity of the OV of the RVA, DVA and of the OV of the establishment, through the inspection of the establishment and the related documents, once per year. A report of this supervisory visit has to be sent to the establishment and to the respective RVA and DVA.

In the framework of food supervision, the DVA has to carry out sampling of foodstuffs and components of animal origin for laboratory examination in the competent SVI.

Sampling and laboratory examinations are planned for the next calendar year and directed by the “Methodical instructions” of the SVA.

5.7.3.2. Findings

• In the poultry slaughterhouses visited the permanent presence of the OV is assured and recorded.

• Guidelines on veterinary supervision have been issued by the CCA and were available.

• Documentation of the supervisory work of the OV of the plant, at the frequency foreseen in the guidelines, was available, and varied from satisfactory to acceptable.
• In general, in the monthly reports, shortcomings were indicated as well as a timetable to rectify them and the actions taken. However, in one case, although shortcomings were indicated in one monthly report, and corrective actions requested, in the following monthly reports no documentation on the actions taken to rectify the shortcomings was found.

• In one case, the mission team saw one carcass with significant faecal contamination in the cutting room, without the OV having noticed it or taken action.

• Documentation on visits by the OVs from the District, Regional and Central services was available. However, the veterinary supervision by the different levels was not always effective. In particular, a severe shortcoming was found in one slaughterhouse with integrated cutting section. The immersion chiller was located in the cutting room²².

• In addition, in one case, shortcomings detected by the mission team (e.g. important ice-snow condensation on ceiling, floor and door of two frozen storage rooms) were not mentioned in the reports from the different levels of supervision.

• The health certificates of the company staff were available in the plant and mentioned that they were specific for working in poultry meat establishments.

²² Written guaranties were provided by the CCA during the final meeting, indicating that no use of the immersion chilling will made during the cutting operations in the same room and that the immersion chiller will be removed from the cutting room by the end of 2001.
5.7.4. Findings in the establishments

**General remark:** The following main findings were noted in the sites visited. Not all the findings were noted in each site.

5.7.4.1. Structure, layout, clean-dirty separation

The structures and layout of the establishments visited were, in general, satisfactory. However some deficiencies were noticed, such as:

- Insufficient separation between clean and dirty areas/operations:
- Opening between scalding room and evisceration room too large
- Insufficient segregation between dirty and clean meat trays in the tray washing room and same entrance/exit for dirty/clean trays.

No facilities to protect waiting birds against climatic conditions.

In one establishment with integrated cutting room, the immersion chiller was located in the cutting room.

5.7.4.2. Fittings, technical equipment

In general, the fittings and technical equipment of the establishments were modern and satisfactory. However a number of deficiencies were noticed:

- Distance between the stunning and bleeding area too short.
- Carcasses wash (breast shower) after evisceration, but before post-mortem inspection.
- Insufficient containment and ducting of waste water.
- Splash and aerosol in combination with insufficient ventilation and steam extraction.
- Important ice-snow condensation on ceiling, floor and door of some frozen storage rooms.
- Inspection posts were in general adequately equipped. However, some shortcomings were noticed, eg.: hand-wash basins and sterilisers placed too far away, not always possible to examine carcasses and related offals and to register post-mortem finding.
- Insufficient number of wash basins and sterilisers in the cutting room.
- Only cold water in some wash basins in different rooms.
5.7.4.3. Cleanliness, maintenance

The plants visited were in general quite clean and well maintained. Some deficiencies, however were noted:

- Floors, walls and ceiling of some of the workrooms not well cleaned or in insufficient state of repair.
- Some transport belts damaged and difficult to clean.
- Some rusty equipment in room with unprotected meat (chilling tunnel).
- Cleaning and disinfecting of trays for transport of live birds were not sufficient.

5.7.4.4. Hygiene of operations

The hygiene of operations was acceptable. However, a number of deficiencies were noted:

- Operators in the evisceration room did not wash their hands frequently enough during activities.
- In the cutting room, staff had insufficient working space to operate hygienically.
- In one case one carcass with significant faecal contamination was seen in the cutting room.
- In the cutting room workers handed fresh meat with cloth gloves.
- Workers handling both fresh meat and boxes during the making up of the boxes and the packaging.
- Unfit meat stored in insufficiently identified containers.
- Damaged cartons in freezer stores, leading to incompletely protected meat.

5.7.5. Ante-mortem inspection

5.7.5.1. Description of the system of supervision

All the farms from which live poultry are delivered to slaughterhouses have to be under veterinary supervision.

An OV carries out ante-mortem inspection of the flock 72 hours before delivery to the slaughterhouse, and issues the veterinary transport and ante-mortem certificates.

5.7.5.2. Findings

- The ante-mortem inspection in the farm is not carried out by the OV, but by the PVS, who issues the transport and ante-mortem certificates (see also point 5.2.2).
• The ante-mortem certificate (standard form issued by the CCA), in which the health status of the birds is mentioned, is a report summarising the information from the flock record.

• However, all the information from the flock record was not always mentioned in this report. In some cases, only some data (such as vaccinations, treatments and feed additives), without specifying the dates and the withdrawal period of medical treatments, were mentioned in the report issued by the PVS.

• Evidence was found that the ante-mortem certificate is not always sent to the slaughterhouse 72 hours before arrival of the birds. In general it was sent only 1 day in advance.

• On arrival in the slaughterhouse, another ante-mortem inspection is carried out by the OV at hanging, before stunning. However, only the number of dead on arrival is recorded.

• There is not always an effective check on the number of birds at arrival, and important discrepancies were seen in some cases between the number of birds in the transport certificate and the number recorded in the slaughterhouse. These discrepancies were not recorded by the OV of the slaughterhouse.

5.7.6. Post-mortem inspection

5.7.6.1. Description of the system of supervision

The OV carries out the veterinary inspection of slaughter animals and the meat, the meat disposal and control of cutting and handling. Qualified official auxiliaries (paid by the State administration) may perform practical operations within the framework of inspection and control under his/her personal supervision and responsibility. The official auxiliaries working in processing establishments (meat inspectors) are graduates from secondary level schools of veterinary orientation.

The results from the ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection of slaughter poultry are recorded on an official form.

5.7.6.2. Findings

• The post-mortem inspection is carried out either by the OV or by official auxiliaries under his supervision.

• The possibility to inspect body cavities or breasts exists and was in general done. However, no evidence was seen that the OV examines the viscera of a random sample of 300 birds taken from each consignment.

• In one of the establishments visited, the offal were not available for all carcasses at the post-mortem inspection post.

• Although the results of the post-mortem inspection were recorded, only a few categories of rejected causes were mentioned.
• The post-mortem inspection posts are in general adequately equipped, although some minor deficiencies were noticed (see also point 5.7.4.2)

• Carcasses are washed after evisceration and before post-mortem inspection.

5.7.7.  Own Checks

5.7.7.1. Description of the system of supervision

On the basis of the national legislation, operators have to ensure regular own checks (cleaning and disinfection, pest control, control of potable water etc.) of compliance with the hygienic conditions of manufacture, including microbiological controls. These controls concern the instruments, equipment, premises and facilities in establishment at all stages of operations and, when necessary, also products and raw materials in all parts of the establishment. An operator has to notify the OV, at the request of the DVA, the type of checks, frequency and method of sampling, methods of microbiological analysis and results of own checks performed, together with the name of the laboratory, which carries out the analysis.

The operator must permanently carry out own checks, based on determination of critical points for processes used in an establishment for meat products, and based on the determination and implementation of procedures for their monitoring and control according to the individual Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system.

He must takes samples for analysis in a laboratory approved for this purpose by the CA for the control of efficiency of cleaning and disinfection methods.

He has to keep records of the data required and to preserve them in order to submit them on request to the DVA. He has to keep the results from all controls and laboratory examinations for at least 2 years.

5.7.7.2. Findings

• All the own checks, some of them based on the HACCP principles, were in place and documentation was available.

• The own checks programme is set up in collaboration with the OV of the plant.

• Instructions for the supervision of the own check programme by the OV of the plant have been issued by the CCA and were available.

• Evidence of the supervision of the own check programme by the OV of the plant was found. However, evidence was not always found of their supervision by the OVs from the district, regional or central level.
5.7.8. **Use of immersion chiller**

5.7.8.1. Description of the system of supervision

Slaughtered poultry intended for immersion chilling process must, immediately after evisceration, be thoroughly washed by spraying and immersed without delay.

The immersion chilling process must meet the requirements of Council Directive 71/118/EEC.

5.7.8.2. Findings

- In the slaughterhouses visited, both air/spray chilling and immersion chilling are used. However, the immersion chiller was not in operation during the visit due to the fact that it used only 2 to 3 times per week in both establishments.

- The control of the immersion chilling is considered as part of the own-controls to be carried out by the personnel of the slaughterhouse.

- The mission team checked the documentation recorded and evidence was seen that the immersion chillers were controlled in accordance with the EC requirements.

- The internal temperature of the carcasses and of the cut meat was in line with the EU legislation requirements. In addition, the temperature of the cutting room was +12°C, as required by the national legislation.

5.7.9. **Use of potable water**

5.7.9.1. Description of the system and of its supervision

In accordance with SR legislation, the food establishments have to be supplied with potable water. The operator must ensure potable water controls in compliance with the requirements stated by the public health protection authorities. Exceptionally, other water meeting the conditions of the special regulation can be used.

Only the State Veterinary Institute in Dolný Kubin tests the potable water.

The OV carries out official sampling for the analysis and checks the results of the companies’ testing.

5.7.9.2. Findings

A water distribution map, identifying the sampling points and pipes, was available in the plants visited.

In one establishment, no evidence was seen of the inactivation of free residual chlorine at official sampling. The municipal water is chlorinated and a physico-chemical test indicated free residual chlorine content of 0.3 ppm.

Analyses were carried out in an official laboratory.
Documentary evidence of supervision of results by OV was not always seen.

5.7.10. Training programmes for official veterinarians, auxiliaries and company staff.

5.7.10.1. Description of the system

Company staff is obliged to have a sanitary certificate of professional ability. This certificate is issued by the State District Public Health Officer in compliance with the national legislation on protection of public health based on the performance of the written examination in presence of the Commission appointed by the State District Public Health Officer (competencies of the Ministry of Health of the SR).

After successful completion of the tests, the State District Public Health Officer issues a certificate of professional ability.

The operators of establishments are obliged to ensure and to carry out training of their employees, which is adjusted to reflect the actual production activity. The OV of the respective DVA takes part in planning the training and in its implementation.

The official veterinarians, after their degree, take part in an education course, which is regularly performed at least each five years at the Institute for Education and Postgraduate Study of Veterinarians in Košice.

5.7.10.2. Findings

- Training programmes for company staff were organised in the establishments visited. Documentation (list of people involved, frequency and course programme) that such training is carried out was available.

- The OVs of the slaughterhouses visited were involved in the organisation of the training programme.

- List of participants and syllabus of the OVs participating in the training organised in the Kosice Institute was available in the RVO visited.

- Documentary evidence of the organisation of training for official auxiliaries was not seen.

5.7.11. Trade in meat – trace back – meat, meat products and live poultry export

5.7.11.1. Description of the system of supervision

The SVA have issued instructions (No. 1239/2000-240 dated 10 February 2000) in regard to the veterinary certification of consignments for export to the EU. The OVs have the authorisation by the SVA for issuing the certificate on animal health and wholesomeness at export from establishments approved for export into the EU.
Labels with oval health marks with legible data are used for marking large packages containing poultry meat fit for human consumption (poultry in cartons). The health marks are ordered by the operator and handed over based on a protocol to the respective DVA together with a copy of the order and invoice delivery invoice. The OV of the plant has to record in a separate book the receipt and delivery of health mark labels.

5.7.11.2. Findings

- In slaughterhouses with integrated cutting section, tracing back of carcasses to the farm of origin was possible. This was, however, not reliable for cut meat.

- Documentation regarding incoming and outgoing meat was not always available. In particular, in the meat product establishment visited, documentation regarding outgoing meat products/meat preparations was not completely available. For one particular consignment no correspondence could be found between the quantity of meat imported (from a non-EU country) and the quantity sold (mainly in the national market).

- The OV has documented supervision of the use of health marks. They are under direct control of the OV, and a control system of health marks used in export trade, serially numbered, is in place.

- The approval number of the establishment was mentioned on the commercial labels.

- The certificate model used for export to the Community of fresh poultry meat was in compliance with EC legislation. The certificates were serially numbered and distributed by the CCA.

- The certificates for export of meat are issued by the OV of the plant.

- The correct certificates for export of poultry meat were available at plant level.

- No certificates for export of poultry meat products were available in the meat processing plant visited due to the fact that it has not yet exported meat products to the EU.

- Certificates for the export of meat preparations to EU, an issue not included in the scope of the mission, were available. However, the team raised some doubts at the end of the mission due to the fact that the meat preparations exported were produced with pork.

- The correct certificates for export of live poultry and hatching eggs to the EU were available.
5.7.12. Veterinary supervision of poultry meat processing plants.

5.7.12.1. Description of the system of supervision

Inspection activity in establishments approved for export to the EU is carried out according to instructions issued by the CCA (No. 8846/2000-230 of 22 December 2000). It is described in point 5.7.3.1.

A system of food hygiene control (HACCP system) has to be in place (see also point 5.7.7.1).

The mission team visited one of the two poultry meat product establishments approved for the export to EU: it is also approved for the export of meat preparations.

5.7.12.2. Findings

- The poultry meat products plant visited had not yet exported meat products to the EU. For the time being, the poultry meat products are sold in the national market or exported to non-EU countries. Meat preparations, on the other hand, are exported to the EU (see also point 5.7.11.2).

- The permanent presence of the OV, as foreseen in SR legislation but not in EC legislation, was assured and documentary evidence was seen in regard to the veterinary supervision of the plant.

- The plant visited was well structured and satisfactory as far as the operational conditions are concerned.

- The own check programmes, based on the HACCP principles, are set up in collaboration with the OV of the plant and documentation was available\(^{23}\).

- Evidence was found that the OV of the plant supervises the own check programme (see also point 5.7.6.2).

- Evidence was not seen that the district, regional or central CA supervises the own check programmes.

- Documentation regarding incoming and outgoing meat was not completely available (see also point 5.7.11.2).

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\(^{23}\) The mission team checked only the own check programme for meat products.
6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Competent Authorities (CA) performance

A proper structure for the CA responsible for the supervision of both animal and public health has been established. However, some deficiencies concerning feed-back of information from district to regional and central level, in particular regarding animal health, were seen.

The supervision of the official performances of the PVS was not always satisfactory. Conflict of interest cannot be excluded in regard to the official tasks performed by the PVS.

6.2. Laboratory service

The performances of the laboratory service were in general well documented except in regard to its capacity to perform ICPI for ND and IVPI for AI.

Budgetary constraints hamper the proper functioning of the laboratory visited.

6.3. Animal health controls

On the basis of the information received, the animal health situation appears favourable. Epizootic poultry diseases have not occurred in SR for a long time and a compulsory vaccination programme against ND and controls over its efficacy in breeders are in place.

In the breeding sector, the situation in regard to the control of *Salmonella pullorum/gallinarum* and *Mycoplasma* spp. appears favourable.

However, weaknesses exist in the supervision system, in particular regarding the supervision of ND vaccination, in checks on its efficacy and in the system applied to compensate owners in case of flock slaughter.

6.4. Veterinary supervision at the time of slaughter regarding animal welfare

Animal welfare conditions at the time of slaughter were satisfactory except in one of the establishments. Its veterinary supervision was not always satisfactory.

Problems exist with regard to the veterinary supervision of animal welfare conditions of birds on arrival.

6.5. Food safety controls

6.5.1. Veterinary supervision of the farms

Official veterinary supervision of the farms was in general satisfactory. However, the supervision of the official tasks performed by the PVS in the farm was not always acceptable.
Not all the requirements of Council Directive 71/118/EEC were fulfilled in regard to the flock records.

6.5.2. Approval procedure for poultry meat and poultry meat product establishments

The approval procedures have not always been followed in the establishments visited. A severe deficiency was found in one of the plants, which should not have been approved for export to the EU.

6.5.3. Veterinary supervision of establishments

Veterinary supervision is in place in the establishments visited and is broadly satisfactory.

Veterinary supervision by the different levels (district, regional and central) is in general well documented and satisfactory. However, for certain aspects, this supervision was not totally effective.

The establishments visited have, in general, good structures and satisfactory operational conditions. However, some deficiencies were noted.

6.5.4. Ante-mortem inspection

The ante-mortem inspection is not fully in compliance with the EC requirements, in particular with regard to information on flock records and their transmission to the slaughterhouse.

Some doubts exist as to the status of the PVS who carries out this inspection (see point 6.1).

6.5.5. Post-mortem inspection

The post-mortem inspection is in general satisfactory, although some weaknesses were noticed.

6.5.6. Own checks

Own check programmes in the slaughterhouses are in place and documentation on these checks is available.

The veterinary supervision of own checks by the OV, was in general satisfactory.

6.5.7. Use of immersion chiller

A severe shortcoming was found regarding the location of the immersion chiller in one of the plant visited. Apart from this, the documentation on the control of the use of the immersion chiller was in accordance with the EC requirements.
6.5.8. **Use of potable water**

The control of water quality satisfies national legislation and the parameters used meet the EC requirements. However, the veterinary supervision of the results was not always satisfactory.

6.5.9. **Training programmes for official veterinarians, auxiliaries and company staff**

Training programmes for the official veterinarian and company staff are organised and well documented.

6.5.10. **Trade in meat - trace back – meat/meat products and live poultry export**

Traceability systems are not fully reliable. Problems exist in particular in the independent meat products establishment where checks on the destination of the poultry meat were not fully reliable.

There is a system in place allowing adequate supervision of health mark labels and certificates.

The correct certificates for export of poultry meat and for export of live birds were available at field level.

Further investigation might be needed as some doubts exist in relation to the export of pig meat preparations.

6.5.11. **Veterinary supervision of poultry meat processing plant**

Veterinary supervision was satisfactory except in regard to the documentation of outgoing meat.

6.6. **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

The overall situation in the Slovak Republic in regard to animal and public health aspects of poultry and poultry meat production for export to the EU is in general satisfactory, taking into account the small number of EU approved establishments and the small quantity of poultry meat exported to the EU.

However, the deficiencies and/or non-compliance with EC requirements found in each step of the poultry meat production chain demonstrate that, despite the supervision set up at all CA levels, its effectiveness and efficiency are not totally satisfactory.

7. **ACTION TAKEN DURING AND AT THE END OF THE MISSION**

At the end of each visit to the individual establishments, the deficiencies found were discussed in the presence of the official veterinarian(s), the accompanying representative from the CCA and the management.

The mission team made clear that it is the responsibility of the national authorities to ensure that any deficiencies found in the individual plants and sites are rectified as soon as possible.
8. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held in Bratislava on 19 October 2001 with the CCA of SR. At this meeting, the main findings and conclusions of the mission were presented by the mission team. The CCA was asked to send written guarantees to the FVO that the shortcoming noticed in one slaughterhouse in regard to the location of the immersion chiller (see also point 5.7.6.2) has been rectified.

The CCA offered the following comment:

findings were acknowledged and measures would be taken to correct the deficiencies identified, detailed comments would be made after the reception of the draft report.

The CCA provided written guarantees concerning the above-mentioned shortcoming to the mission team at the end of the meeting.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1. To the competent authorities of Slovak Republic.

The CA should rectify the shortcomings found during this mission and mentioned in this report.

In relation to the different areas covered in this mission, the following more detailed recommendations are made.

9.1.1. Competent authorities performance

This recommendation is particularly important in case the Slovakian CA would propose new EU approved establishments to be added to the current list.

The CA should address the weaknesses of their control system in regard to the following activities:

9.1.1.1. Animal health issues: in particular with regard to the control of vaccination against ND and its efficacy.

9.1.1.2. Animal welfare at the time of slaughter: conditions of the birds at arrival and at stunning.

9.1.1.3. Food safety:

- Establishment approval procedures: before approving any other establishment for export to the EU, the CA of the Slovak Republic should ensure that it complies fully with all Community legislation requirements.

- Veterinary supervision of establishments (including poultry farms): the CA should:
  - ensure that flock records are kept on the farms and include all the information required by point 27 (a) of Annex I of Council Directive 71/118/EEC,
– improve the veterinary supervision in particular regarding the control of outgoing meat in meat product processing plant,

– improve the quality of the documentation supporting and demonstrating the supervisory activities,

• Ante-mortem inspection: the CA should ensure that the ante-mortem inspection is fully in compliance with the EC requirements.

• Use of potable water: the CA should address the weaknesses in the veterinary supervision in this field.

• Trade in meat – trace back – meat/meat products and live poultry export: the CA should ensure that traceability systems in place are fully reliable.

9.1.1.4. Control of official tasks delegated: the CA should improve the supervision of the PVS official performances and takes appropriate measures to avoid conflict of interest.

9.1.2. Others

The CA should improve the system applied to refund the owner in case of slaughter of the flocks.

9.1.3. Written guarantees

The CCA should forward to Commission services, within three months following reception of the final report, an action plan detailing the corrective measures already taken and those still outstanding for addressing the aforementioned recommendations, as well as a timetable for its completion.

9.2. To the Commission services

The Commission services should continue to monitor the progress of veterinary supervision in the field of poultry meat, poultry meat products production and live poultry in the Slovak Republic.
10. ADDENDUM TO MISSION REPORT DG(SANCO)/3426/2001

Central Competent Authority’s response to the recommendations in the report

The CA of Slovak Republic has informed the FVO in their communication of 14 March 2002 that they accepted the recommendations of the draft report. They also indicated the correction of some of the deficiencies, in particular:

- The definition of AI and ND will be part of the Governmental Orders that are in the process of elaboration at the present.

- Some improvements of the weaknesses in the supervision system regarding animal health controls will be made.

- The system of the supervision of the official performances of the PVS will be solved by the methodical instruction of the District Veterinary and Food Administration.