



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH AND CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Directorate D - Food and Veterinary Office

DG(SANCO)/1158/1999/MR – FINAL

FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION TO CROATIA FROM 12 TO 16 JULY 1999
(ANIMAL HEALTH AND CERTIFICATION)



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1 Mission details

1.1 Purpose of mission

The mission took place in Croatia from the 12th to the 16th of July 1999 as part of the planned mission programme. The main objective was to assess the implementation of the live animal identification, certification and movement legislation by the central competent authority (CCA), taking into account the findings made during previous missions. On this occasion the mission team were particularly interested in observing the procedures adopted when horses are exported to the EU for human consumption.

Commission Decision 98/372/EC lays down animal health and veterinary certification requirements for the importation of live animals (bovine & porcine species) into the EU from Croatia and other European countries. A further objective of the mission was to assess the implementation of Decision 98/372/EC (as amended by Decision 98/505/EC) and the application of the new certification process.

1.2 Organisation of mission

The mission team was composed of two inspectors from the Food and Veterinary Office and various representatives from the Croatian veterinary service who accompanied the inspection team throughout the mission. The mission started with an opening meeting on the 12th of July held at the National Veterinary Service Headquarters. This was also the location for the final meeting which took place on the 16th of July.

1.2.1 Sites visited

Category	Sites visited		Number
CCA	Competent authority offices	Central	1
CRA		Regional	1
CLA		Local (authorised vet. Station)	3
LCR	Laboratory service	Central/reference	2
LRR		Regional	1
LLL		Local	1
BIP	Border inspection posts		3
FFF	Farms		4
FQC	Quarantine centres		1
FMM	Market		1
FBC	Breeding Centre		2

2 Legal basis for the mission

The mission was carried out under the general provision of Community law and especially:

1. Council Directive 72/462/EEC on health and veterinary inspections problems upon importation of bovine, ovine and caprine animals and swine, fresh meat or meat products from third countries.
2. Council Directive 90/426/EEC on animal health conditions governing the movement and import from third countries of equidae.
3. Council Directive 96/93/EC on certification of animals and animal products.
4. Commission Decision 98/140/EC laying certain rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in third countries.

3 Background

3.1 Summary of previous animal health missions finding

Several missions (animal & public health) have been undertaken in the past to Croatia and include animal health missions in 1996 and 1997 (see Doc.VI/8099/96 and Doc. XXIV/2034/97 respectively). The last animal health mission report (June 1997) concluded that the performance of the veterinary services was adequate and that the whole Croatian territory was under their effective control. Furthermore, the animal health situation was good. The report made the following recommendations:

(a) To the Commission:

To lift the regionalisation of Croatia as per Decision 93/242/EEC and to withdraw from Croatia their officially free status for Bovine Tuberculosis and Brucellosis. This recommendation was made because of the re-integration into the Republic of the districts of Osjecko-baranjska and Istarska where tests had not been undertaken for the duration of the war.

(b) To the Croatian authority:

To designate a Reference Laboratory (to meet their public and animal health obligations) and to establish validation procedures for the regional laboratories.

In response to the recommendations detailed above, Decision 98/372/EC was amended by Decision 98/505/EC. This revised decision removed the regionalisation of Croatia so that the districts of Osjecko-baranjska and Istarska could be included and the certificates were amended, requesting additional guarantees for Bovine for breeding and production.

3.2 Live animal imports from Croatia

Croatia is on the list of third countries from which Member States are authorised to import live animals and products (Council Directive 72/462/EEC and Council Decision 79/542/EEC).

- The specific animal health conditions and veterinary certification requirements for the importation of live animals of bovine and porcine species from Croatia are laid down in Decision 98/372/EC as amended by Decision 98/505/EC. This Decision authorises the importation into the EU of bovines for breeding and production, and slaughter from anywhere within Croatia. Bovines destined for breeding, however, must be accompanied by a guarantee that they come from a registered herd free from Tuberculosis, Brucellosis and Leucosis. No export of swine into the EU (for breeding or slaughter) is authorised.
- The specific animal health conditions and veterinary certification requirements for the importation of live ovine and caprine species for breeding, fattening and slaughter are laid down in Decision 93/198/EEC as last amended by Decision 97/231/EC.

For equidae - Croatia is included in the list of countries (group B), from which imports are authorised, of the annex I of Council Decision 93/197/EEC. At present most equidae imported from Croatia are destined for human consumption in Italy. The list of laboratories approved by the member states for the importation of equidae from Eastern Europe was distributed at the SVC in April 1999 (Doc VI/3058/1999). The “Croatian Veterinary Institute at Savska cesta, 143 Zagreb”, has been approved by the Competent Authority (C.A.) of Germany, Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands and the “Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Heinzelova, 55 Zagreb”, has been approved by Italy.

4 Observations

4.1 General Veterinary Administration

The veterinary services in Croatia belong to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Ministarstvo Poljoprivrede i Sumarstva). A description of the Croatian veterinary services was given in Doc. XXIV/2034/97. A good description can also be found on the web-site: www.veterinarstvo.hr. Only complementary or more in-depth information will be given in this report.

4.1.1 National Veterinary Administration (Uprava za veterinarstvo)

The National Veterinary Act was published in the Croatian Official Journal on the 7th of July 1997. It is a comprehensive document, which defines the area of responsibility of the public, and private veterinary services and includes the list of notifiable diseases.

The veterinary administration is responsible for the adoption and enforcement of the legislation on animal health protection, control of zoonotic diseases, safety of products of animal origin, promotion of animal reproduction and veterinary environmental protection.

4.1.2 Field services

The country is divided in 20 districts (Županija) and the City of Zagreb, having the status of a district), including district 14 (Osječko-baranjska) and 18 (Istarska), which have been recently re-integrated into the Republic. During the war and especially during periods of occupation, animal health (intensive surveillance and monitoring programmes) was not totally under the control of the Croatian veterinary service. In each district there is a District State Inspector in charge of supervising activities in the animal and public health sectors.

4.1.3 Veterinary stations and Authorised Veterinarians

The Local veterinary services have been totally privatised. The different types of private practice are classified according to the size and type of work.

A typical "veterinary station" group contains 10-30 veterinarians - it may have branches in the area covered and provide the livestock owners of the area with all livestock related services (treatments, fertility work, prophylaxis, animal feed and drugs sales etc). Some veterinarians are also "Authorised Veterinarians" (AV). These veterinarians are 'authorised' by the Central C.A. to perform some official duties, such as taking samples for national surveillance programmes, vaccinating pigs against CSF, etc.

Included in the authorised veterinarians' work are slaughterhouses and other establishments.

Approximately 50% of the work and the income of a veterinary station are derived from private practice and 50% from " public health activities" though the proportion of each varies throughout the year.

- One of the tasks of the authorised veterinarian is to sign certificates. At present the veterinarian providing clinical services to the farmer and export certification belongs to the same organisation (possible non-compliance with Council Directive 96/93/EC, Art 4a: certifying officers should be impartial and have no commercial interest in the animals or products being certified).

In total there are 107 "veterinary stations" and 25 outpatient clinics, each covering one or more Municipalities or "epidemiological unit". The mission team visited several veterinary stations and collected the following information:

	Station 1	Station 2	Station 3
Characteristic of the area	Rural	Middle size town In addition to the Vet. Station there are 2 vet Ambulances	Periurban
Structure	1 central + 5 branches	1 central + 6 branches	1 central
Total number of veterinarians	25	18	11
Authorised vets.	8	15 of which only 3 actually work on certification	8
Livestock figures	4,000 dairy cows, 80,000-100,000 pigs in smallholders, 60 horses at smallholders farms, 1 stud farm, 5,000 sheep, 2,500 Goats, 6,000 dogs	5,000 cattle, 25,000-30,000 pigs, 150,000 poultry, 6,000 dogs, 20 horses	2,000 dairy cows, 10,000 pigs in smallholders farm, 1 farm with 10,000 pigs. 2,500 dogs and 500 sheep.

4.2 Animal Health Situation

4.2.1 List A diseases:

Foot and Mouth (FMD): Croatia has been free from FMD since 1978. 10% of the sensitive animals imported into Croatia are tested for FMD by ELISA, and so far, all tests have been negative. No serological surveillance for FMD in indigenous animals is carried out.

Classical Swine Fever (CSF): During the mission there was the first outbreak this year (1999), the previous outbreak occurring in October 1997. There is a CSF vaccination policy. In 1996 and in preceding years there were several outbreaks of CSF during which time vaccination was compulsory and the costs borne by the farmer. The Croatian veterinary services estimate that there was incomplete vaccination cover of the swine population. In 1998 the government introduced (free of charge) compulsory vaccination, resulting in almost complete vaccination cover (98%). In 1999 the Government will subsidise the vaccine and the farmer will have to pay the veterinary fees – good vaccination cover is anticipated. A private company manufactures the vaccine in Croatia. Details of vaccination strategy change slightly from year to year but in general - all pigs older than 60 days must be vaccinated.

An independent consultant (funded by the World Bank) will carry out an evaluation of the different vaccination options later in 1999. This may or may not lead to a change in Croatian vaccination policy.

The veterinary services representatives told the mission that the farming community is in favour of a non-vaccination policy because they wish to export pig meat-products.

The outbreak which occurred during the mission involved 2 smallholdings where 5 sick animals and 5 “in contact” animals were destroyed. A movement ban was implemented (20km radius). The area is hilly, there are few animals (350 pigs) and no industrial holdings. The affected animals had been on the farm for three months and no other animals had been introduced to the farm. An epidemiological investigation was ongoing.

Contingency plan: There is a contingency plan and an operations manual for List A diseases. The veterinary services have the legal power to enter any holding.

4.2.2 *List B diseases*

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB): in 1997 there were 10 outbreaks and 38 animals were slaughtered, no more outbreaks were reported between January and October 1998. Farms with more than 10 head of cattle are tested every year. Furthermore, each year in selected districts all animals are tested. Practically all animals in small farms are tested every three years.

Leucosis is present in 5 districts with 32 outbreaks recorded in 1998 (January – October). The testing programme adopted for TB applies also to Leucosis.

Bovine Brucellosis: in holding with more than 5 head of cattle, 20% of breeding cows and heifers are tested annually. Bulls used for reproduction are tested twice a year. No positive cases have been recorded in Croatia since 1965. In small herds (less than 5 heads) all cattle are tested within a group of districts, once every three years. All cases of abortion are to be investigated and samples sent to the regional laboratory.

Porcine Brucellosis: the porcine (including sows) populations are systematically tested for *brucella suis*. From January to October 1998 there were 8 outbreaks of Porcine Brucellosis, all in the districts of Osjecko –baranjska and Istarska. All cases of abortion are to be investigated and samples sent to the regional laboratory.

Small ruminants brucellosis: 10% of imported animals are tested. The last case occurred in 1990, requiring the destruction of 2500 sheep imported from Macedonia. Rams are tested for *Brucella Ovis*.

Rabies is present, the eradication of which is a priority for the state veterinary services. From January to October 1998 there were 200 outbreaks, mainly in foxes but also in martens, wild boar, jackals, dogs, cats, sheep and cattle. Dogs and cats are compulsorily vaccinated. There is an ongoing oral vaccination programme for foxes twice a year, with the collaboration of the hunting associations. There is a stamping-out policy for in contact animals – which includes ruminants. The last human case of rabies was recorded in 1964.

Q fever: 3 outbreaks from January to October 1998 in the district of Licke-Sengsna.

Aujeszky's disease: 1 outbreak between January and October 1998.

4.2.3 Horses

Dourine and Glanders have not been reported since 1952 and 1959 respectively. Horse pox has never been recorded. All stallions at stud are tested annually for Brucellosis, Glanders, leptospirosis, and undergo a spermogram. There has been an eradication campaign in operation for Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA) since 1991. Coggins' test is compulsory under the following circumstances:

- Twice a year for horses used for production of biological preparates (serum, vaccine) and semen for artificial insemination.
- Once a year until 31st October at the latest for all holdings with more than 10 horses.
- When a purchased animal is introduced into a holding/establishment.
- Stallions before licensing (test valid 90 days) and subsequently every year.
- When equines are brought to an exhibition, public show or sporting competition and when covering mares at a stud farm (test valid 90 days).
- When equines are traded (test valid for 30 days).
- When horses are found positive for EIA, a file is opened for the holding, the animals are isolated, marked with an "S" on the hoof and slaughtered within 30 days of a positive test result. Movement restrictions on the holding are only lifted after all the animals have negative results in 3 Coggin's tests performed within 4 months - Non compliance with Decision 93/196/EEC, Annex II, Point III (1)(g)(ii). (Croatian law requires that in cases of EIA, all surviving animals must be tested 3 times within 4 months). The Decision requires that 2 tests are performed, three months apart.

Epidemiology: in 1992 there were 7 outbreaks of EIA, 1993 - 36 outbreaks (during the conflict the territories were not completely under control), 1994 – 215 outbreaks, 1995 - 28 outbreaks. In 1996 systematic tests in the districts of Osjecko-baranjska and Istarska were carried out. The last outbreak in the exporting area (central continental Croatia) was reported in 1997.

Year	Number of serum	Number of positives	% of positives
1996	9786	26	0,21
1997	2818	76	0,77
1998	6870	55	0,80
1999	3023	8	0,26

Historically, the Laboratory of microbiology and infectious diseases at the University of Zagreb is the reference laboratory for EIA. It participated with good results in the international ring test organised by the OIE reference laboratory for EIA from 1979

to 1987 (after which the exercise was discontinued). The laboratory produces its own antigen and is the only one performing the Coggins test in Croatia. Although it has all the data on the prevalence of the disease, the laboratory has no input into EIA eradication campaign.

4.2.4 *Trichinellosis:*

There is an important national programme for the surveillance, prevention and control of Trichinellosis in Swine. 20% of slaughter horses exported to Italy are tested by ELISA for Trichinellosis and results have always been negative. Unfortunately, serological diagnosis is not reliable as an inspection method for horses (Soulé et al, 1989; Pozio et al. 1997), because 4-5 months after the infection, circulating antibodies in the serum can no longer be detected, although there may still be infective larvae in the muscle. At present there is no systematic control for the detection of presence of *Trichinella spiralis* in horsemeat at slaughterhouses

4.2.5 *Wildlife*

Wildlife Health is a responsibility of the veterinary services. There are "hunting associations" which have a "concession" from the government to hunt on particular grounds. The veterinary services establish agreements with those associations so that the health of wild animals (especially wild pigs/boar, deer, ducks, pheasant etc) can be monitored. There is no surveillance of CSF in wild boars.¹

4.3 **Animal Identification**

4.3.1 *Livestock population*

CATTLE (source: Croatia statistical yearbook)							
	Total	Calves Bullock and heifers under 1 year old	Bullocks and heifers		Cow and heifers in Call-Total	Breeding bulls	Oxen
			From 1 to 2 years old	Over 2 year old			
N° of animals (1998)	443 000	112 000	22 000	6 000	300 000	2 000	1 000
Business entities and co-operatives (1997)	50 000	39 000	4 000	1 000	6 000		
Private family farms (1997)	393 000	73 000	18 000	5 000	294 000	2 000	1 000

PIGS (source: Croatia statistical yearbook)							
	Total	Porklings		Pigs over 6 month old	Sows and first faro sows	Breeding boars	Pigs being fattened
		Under 2 months old	2 to 6 month old				
Total (1998)	1 166 000	365 000	526 000	99 000	181 000	5 000	389 000

¹ In their comments on the draft mission report, the Croatian competent authority stated that "Surveillance of CSF in wild boars was initiated within the context of the Croatian Veterinary Institute's scientific projects".

Business entities and co-operatives (1997)	292 000	65 000	189 000	9 000	28 000	1 000	153 000
Private family farms (1997)	874 000	3000 000	327 000	90 000	153 000	4 000	236 000

SHEEP (source: Croatia statistical yearbook)				
	Total	Lambs under one year	Ewes for breeding	Rams and sterile ewe
Total	427 000	90 000	316 00	21 000
Business entities and co-operatives	20 000	4 000	15 000	1 000
Private family farm	407 000	86 000	310 000	20 000

Horses: in 1998 there were 4271 registered equidae in Croatia, which included 3684 horses (917 holdings) and 587 donkey (429 holdings). It is estimated that the total number of horses is 20% higher. The horse population is decreasing rapidly, with the ongoing shift in Croatia from an agricultural to an industrial economy. There were 111 000 horses in 1980, however, these numbers have fallen to 57 000 in 1985, 21 000 in 1994 and 8 000 in 1997. The population of Podovica horse, the Croatian meat breed, was 900 in 1997. Following recognition by the Federation Equine Internationale, the number of registered animals rose to approximately 2000 in 1998. The horses exported for slaughter are usually those kept free range on natural pasture from March to December.

"Filiere Baby-beef": Croatia has in the past specialised in the production of "white meat" calves, typically destined for the Italian market. They wish to resume this trade. Small holders in the countryside rear a few cows for milk production and any calves produced are sold either directly to a fattening farm (who take them to 450/600 kg) or to an intermediate small size fattening farm (250 head) who take them from 2 to 5/7 months. Trade companies usually own the animals, the farmer providing all other inputs (feed, labour & buildings). If the animals are slaughtered in Croatia, the hindquarters are exported and the rest of the carcass is consumed locally.

4.3.2 *Animal Identification*

4.3.2.1 Ruminants and pigs

There is a reliable, centralised system of Animal Identification for ruminants and pigs as required by the "Rules concerning obligatory identification of animals", published in the Official Gazette dated 23rd December 1997.

All bovine and pigs older than 2 month of age or intended for trade (regardless of their age) have to be identified with an ear-tag. Sheep/goats and their progeny over 2 months old, must be identified before their sale and movement to pasture. The Authorised Veterinarian (AV) who registers the birth/location of the animal keeps all the relevant information.

The owner has to inform the AV of the birth of any bovine, pig, sheep or goat within 3 days. Animals have to be earmarked before 2 months of age, or at the moment they are moved. The AV goes to the farm of birth, identifies the animal by ear tag and sends the

information to the central office every month. Ear-tags are only issued and distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture. If the animal changes area, a movement permit is issued, which bears the ID number of the animal. Each time the animal moves, a new certificate is issued, detailing the ID number and the number of the previous certificate. It is possible at any time (using the ID) to identify the date and place of birth, and from this data, other information. Imported animals are identified with a new ear tag at the end of quarantine, however, the old ear-tag must be left in place.

4.3.2.2 Equidae

There is no such comprehensive identification system for horses. Registered horses (e.g. Lipizan and Posavski breeds) are marked with a firebrand which shows the breed and a number. There is no obligation to mark other equidae. If the horse is intended for domestic trade, export, or a sporting event - they must be identified (Law on identification Art.2-2). Identification can be either by hot brand or a document containing a detailed description of the animal. Animals have to be tested for EIA.

To comply with the EU requirement of 30 days isolation, the horses exported for slaughter are brought to a "quarantine farm". They are identified at the quarantine farm by a firebrand (S + number) on the hoof by the authorised veterinarian. The authorised veterinarian keeps a note of all animals branded and a copy of the movement certificates.

4.3.3 Holding registration

Only farms with more than 20 "conditional" head of livestock (one conditional head meaning one or more animals weighing over 500 kg) have to be registered - Art 18 Vet. Law. The smallholdings, which typically have a few "Simmental type" cows, are not registered, however, they supply most of the animals reared on the fattening farms. The Government, and the veterinary services are unwilling to invest time/effort into registering small farms since they think that, being uneconomic, they are likely to disappear over the next 2-3 years.

4.4 Movement

4.4.1 National Movement control

Each time an animal moves from one area to another (mainly to market), the owner must obtain a health and movement certificate from the AV at the local veterinary station. The certificate gives details of the ID or description of the animal, any tests/vaccinations necessary and the AV provides confirmation that the animal comes from an area where there has been no cases of certain specified infectious diseases to which the animal may be sensitive. Records are kept of animal transactions at markets.

4.4.2 International movement:

Figures - Data for 1998 - source: Croatian veterinary services:

	Export	Import	Transit
Cattle for breeding	10	4 528	12 045

Cattle for fattening	0	29 361	
Cattle for slaughter	119	8 549	70 394
Calves	1	46 686	632
Horses for breeding	68	27	4
Horses for slaughter	2 880	101	10 218
Sport horses	287	353	107
Asses	127	98	0
Mules	19	0	3
Sheep for breeding	275	469	18 280
Sheep for slaughter	2 331	2 728	5 363
Lambs	3	29 444	32906
Goats for breeding	235	16	0
Buck	5	0	0
Pigs for breeding	84	174	1 866
Pigs for slaughter	670	27 496	59 588
Pigs	98	83 821	11 889
Rabbit for breeding	25	257	4
Rabbits for slaughter	50	516	0
Hares	524	428	33

4.5 Import procedures

Croatia is essentially an importing country for both animals (breeding and slaughter) and animal products. The issue of “licences” by the central veterinary services regulates importation of live animals. The "licence" is valid for one month and covers different shipments. This arrangement limits the role of the border inspectors. During a visit to a BIP it was noted that many certificates were written in languages other than Croatian or the official language of the exporting country.

The importation of animal products is not regulated by such a licensing system. The central authority may decide, however, to instruct the inspectors at the BIPs to refuse entry of consignments from specific countries - for example when there are concerns about FMD, Dioxin etc. Again, certificates were seen in languages other than Croatian or that of the exporting country. The Croatian inspectors told the team that they sometimes asked the haulier to translate the document.²

4.5.1 Live export of equidae to the EU

Import into the EU from Croatia source: Eurostat 1998

	Total EUR 15	Number	M.S. of destination
Slaughter horses	2633	2633:	Italy
Other horses excluding pure-bred and slaughter horses	122	1	Netherlands
		3	Germany
		6	Austria
Live asses	129	129	Italy
Live mules	14	14	Italy

² In their comments on the draft mission report, the Croatian competent authority gave an observation/explanation regarding this paragraph: “For import of animal products as well as for import of live animals the licence issued by the central veterinary authority is necessary”.

4.6 Certification Procedures

In 1993, Croatian certificates were involved in the illegal movement of FMD infected animals. As a result, the issue of Certificate is now strictly under the control of the central veterinary services and conducted according to good certification practice. Certificates are printed for the veterinary services and kept at their Head Office. They are sent at the request of the AV to the appropriate veterinary station. A record is kept of the certificates issued and from the number it is possible to rapidly identifying were and to whom they were sent. The Certificates bear an embossed Croatian coat of arms.

All seals (numbered) are issued by the central "Ministry of Administration", at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture. In case of loss or theft, the seal number and its invalidation are published in the Official National Gazette. In cases of misuse, sanctions are available against the AV who obtained the seal and the user.

Harmonised Certificates are printed for different type of horses and certificates have been drafted for slaughter cattle. Live horse and some animal product certificates are printed on two sheets of A3 paper, folded to provide 8 pages. They are printed on both faces in Croatian and a second language (Italian, French, English or German). The certificate number appears on pages 1,2,7 & 8 (i.e. the first sheet of A3), however, the second folded A3 sheet, inserted to provide pages 3 to 6 bears no pagination or certificate number. At the moment of delivery the signing official completes the two A3 sheets, staples them together and applies an official stamp. Non harmonised certificates may be written in languages other than Croatian. In all cases, however, certificates are signed by the AVs according to Croatian law and must be kept along with all administrative documents for 2 years.

One original certificate is issued, and accompanies the animals, a copy is given to the owner and a photocopy is made and filed at the BIP. If the BIP veterinarian is not satisfied with the physical and documentary check of a consignment, he has the power to stop it. No copy is kept by the issuing veterinarian. The inspection team looked at some export certificates and made the following observations: the certificates were generally completed correctly and no blank space left on the document. In approximately 50% of certificates (slaughter horses), the Trichinella test date was put erroneously in the blank space provided for a vaccination date for Vesicular Stomatitis, (if needed). In some cases incomplete certificate copies had been filed (first and last page of the document), (Non compliance with Directive 96/93/EC on certification, and Decision 98/372/EC).

Equidae: Horses health certificates were found to be in compliance with Decision 93/196/EEC and with 93/197/EEC. Shipments to Italy are accompanied by an additional document certifying that 20% of the consignment have been tested for Trichinellosis by ELISA and found negative.

Bovine: At present no live bovines are exported, however, Croatia would like to resume the export of "baby-beef" to Italy. The conditions required in Decision 98/372/EC are now fulfilled, in particular - point 2, f as they now test 100% of animals in exporting farms. When a test result is positive for TB, Brucellosis or Leucosis, the herd is identified and put under isolation. New export certification has been prepared

by the CA and it is now in conformity with the provisions of Decision 98/372/EC as amended by Decision 98/505/EC. As Croatia does not plan to export bovine breeding stock, the relevant certificates have not yet been prepared. The Croatian veterinary authorities demonstrated that they were fully familiar with the additional guarantees required by the above Decisions. The senior veterinarian appointed to countersign and number the export certificates, as requested by Art. 4, (a) of Decision 98/372/EC is the BIP Veterinarian.

Sheep and Goats: According to Decision 93/198/EEC the export of ovine and caprine animals to the EU is authorised, however, at present there are no small ruminant exports and none are planned in the foreseeable future.

Transit: Croatia is a transit country. Products of animal origin must transit the country as quickly as possible in a sealed container. The veterinary inspector at the BIP of entry informs an inspector at the BIP of exit to ensure that hauliers comply. The same procedure applies for animals in transit. Croatia does not require all the transit certificates to be written with a Croatian translation. For example, live animals originating from Serbia are accompanied by certificates written in Serbian, which is understood by most Croatians.

4.7 Border Inspection Post

There are 31 BIPs in Croatia of which 6 were opened in 1997. Croatia has borders with 5 countries (Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Hungary and Yugoslavia), and the border posts with Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Yugoslavia are completely new. The inspection team visited 3 border posts and found their operation to be satisfactory but for the occasional failure to keep a complete copy of a certificate (see above).

Border post n°1: 4 Vets. 500 to 600 shipments per month of which 30 to 50 were live animals (mainly in transit).

Border post n° 2: Activity reduced due to the war in the neighbouring country. 40 to 45 shipments per month - very limited live animal movement (mainly transit), however, the BIP will be important in peacetime.

Border post n° 3: 1140 slaughter horses and 94 sport horses were exported. 78 imported. BIP open for 6a.m. To 12 p.m. Each veterinarian works 170 hours/month.

Certificates and movement records were readily available at all 3 BIPs.

4.8 Laboratories

There is one central laboratory with 4 regional laboratories. The central laboratory has been designated as a reference laboratory. It participates in international ring test for viral diseases. It organises the ring test for brucellosis and plans to expand the service

to other diseases. Now in receipt of a loan from the World Bank, new equipment is being purchased and staff are being trained abroad in the latest laboratory techniques and epidemiology. The laboratory organises the ring test for Brucellosis. When a new technique is introduced, staff from the different regional laboratories are summoned to Zagreb for training. For example, when new diagnostic techniques were introduced for Rabies, all the relevant staff from the regional laboratories were given 2 weeks of training with an exam at the end (15 test samples).

The regional laboratories perform Brucellosis and Leucosis tests and all dubious rabies cases are referred to the National Laboratory. Although testing is extensive and covers almost the entire cattle population, the AV and the area inspectors are only informed about positive results. When this occurs, a file is opened and movement restrictions introduced while a further tests etc are carried on by the AV under the supervision of the District Inspector.

For historical reasons, the Laboratory of microbiology and infectious diseases at the veterinary faculty in Zagreb is in charge of testing for EIA (see point 4.2.3).

5 Conclusions

- The Croatian veterinary services have a good structure, a clear chain of command, legal provision to fight important diseases (see 4.2), dedicated/competent staff. Moreover, a National Reference laboratory has been designated.
- The Croatian legislation allows the veterinary services to meet most of EU requirements (identification/ movement/ tracing) and it is implemented effectively. The animal health situation is generally good and eradication campaigns are producing results.
- Animal tracing is possible using a system adapted to the national conditions.

However,

- Some EU requirements on freedom from EIA are not met.
- Certification procedures are good but not fully in line with EU requirements (see 4.6).
- Smallholdings are not registered.
- Trichinella examination (digestion method) is not carried out in Croatian abattoirs on carcasses of equidae submitted to post mortem inspection or on dead equidae for diagnostic purposes. Therefore, the incidence of the infection in equidae in Croatia has not been established and the health of consumers eating horsemeat is not sufficiently protected.

6 Recommendations

6.1. To the Croatian Competent Authorities:

1. To modify Croatian legislation on EIA to meet EU requirements within 2 months of receiving the final report.
2. To give :
 - instructions within one month of receiving final report to the authorised veterinarians to provide certification fully in accordance with EU requirements;
 - guarantees that Authorised Veterinarians will ensure that they are always fully aware of the content of any certificate they sign, and that alternative AV's will be selected when there is a conflict of interest.
3. To take the necessary measures to register herds as part of the procedure for qualifying herds according to Decision 98/372/EC as amended by Decision 98/505/EC.
4. To introduce trichinella examination (digestion method) for all equidae slaughtered for human consumption or during autopsy.

A timetable indicating when the corrective measures for all the above points will be completed should be submitted within 30 working days of receiving the final report.

6.2. To the Commission services:

1. To clarify with the Italian veterinary service whether or not special agreements have been concluded with third countries, requiring pre-import Trichinellosis ELISA tests for horses, even though a harmonised Community certificate exists.