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FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN CYPRUS
FROM 9 TO 13 JANUARY 2006
IN ORDER TO REVIEW CONTROLS
CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the outcome of a mission carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Cyprus, from 9 to 13 January 2006.

The objective of the mission was to evaluate the control system in place concerning animal welfare. In order to achieve this objective, the scope of the mission included the legal and administrative measures in place regarding requirements for pigs and laying hens, transport of animals and at slaughterhouses.

The report concludes that the system of inspection put in place is overall adequate and is being progressively implemented. Instructions and checklists are largely comprehensive, and are effectively used by the local level. Most deficiencies were detected but the lack of emphasis on practical aspects diminished the way in which certain requirements were checked. Follow up actions were scheduled but they were not always sufficient to ensure that deficiencies were corrected.

The report makes a number of recommendations addressed to the competent authorities of Cyprus, aimed at rectifying the identified shortcomings and further enhancing the control measures in place.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The mission took place in Cyprus from 9 to 13 January 2006, as part of the planned mission programme of the Food and Veterinary office (FVO).

The mission team comprised 3 inspectors from the FVO and was accompanied during the whole mission by a representative from the central competent authority, the Veterinary Services of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (hereafter: CCA).

An opening meeting was held on 9 January 2006 with the CCA. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the mission were confirmed by the inspection team, and additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the mission requested.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION

The objective of the mission was to verify the application of European Union (EU) requirements in the field of animal welfare. The scope included the legal and administrative measures in place regarding requirements for pigs and laying hens, transport of animals and at slaughterhouses.

In pursuit of the objective, the following meetings were held and sites visited:

VISITS			Comments
Competent authority	Central	2	Opening and final meeting at the CCA headquarters.
	Regional (district)	2	Larnaca and Pafos District Veterinary Offices were selected by the inspection team, in order to discuss in more detail the organisation of checks and follow up actions.
Slaughterhouses		2	Two establishments, one for red meat species and one for poultry, were selected by the inspection team from a list provided by the CCA.
Laying hen farms		2	One with hens kept in unenriched cages and one alternative system, and which were selected by the inspection team from lists of farms provided by the CCA.
Pig farms		2	Both with a complete production cycle, and which were selected by the inspection team from a list of farms provided by the CCA.

3. BACKGROUND

This was the first FVO mission specifically on animal welfare to Cyprus. Prior to accession to the EU, the FVO carried out missions in the framework of accession preparations, in order to assist and monitor progress with the adoption of EU legislation, where certain requirements on animal welfare were also evaluated.

4. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE MISSION

The mission was carried out under the general provisions of Community legislation¹ and in particular Article 9 of Council Directives 99/74/EC², 91/629/EEC³ and 91/630/EEC⁴; Article 7 of Council Directive 98/58/EC⁵; Article 14 of Council Directive 93/119/EC⁶; Article 10 of Council Directive 91/628/EEC⁷, Commission Decision 98/139/EC⁸ and Article 45 of Regulation (EC) n°882/2004⁹.

5. MAIN FINDINGS

5.1. Competent authority

At central level, one veterinary officer at the Animal Health and Welfare Division of the Veterinary Services is responsible for harmonizing the national legislation with the EU legislation, preparing and issuing circulars, guidelines and inspection check lists. The Animal Health and Welfare Division is also responsible for the coordination of the District Veterinary Offices; issuing information leaflets; training of veterinary staff and farmers; preparation of quarterly and annual reports.

There are five District Veterinary Offices (hereafter: local CAs), which are responsible for implementing the legislation, performing inspections and

¹ Legal acts quoted in this report refer, where applicable, to the last amended version.

² Council Directive 1999/74/EC of 19 July 1999, laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens, OJ L 203 of 3.8.1999, p. 53 (hereafter: Directive 99/74/EC).

³ Council Directive 91/629/EEC of 19 November 1991 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves, OJ L 340 of 11.12.1991, p. 28 (hereafter: Directive 91/629/EEC).

⁴ Council Directive 91/630/EEC of 19 November 1991 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, OJ L 340 of 11.12.1991, p.33 (hereafter: Directive 91/630/EEC).

⁵ Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes, OJ L 221 of 8.8.1998, p. 23 (hereafter: Directive 98/58/EC).

⁶ Council Directive 93/119/EC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing, OJ L 340 of 31.12.1993 p. 21 (hereafter: Directive 93/119/EC).

⁷ Council Directive 91/628/EEC of 19 November 1991 on the protection of animals during transport and amending Directives 90/425/EEC and 91/496/EEC, OJ L 340 of 11.12.1991, p. 17 (hereafter: Directive 91/628/EEC).

⁸ Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in the Member States, OJ L 38 of 12.02.1998, p. 10.

⁹ Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules (EC) No 882/2004, OJ L 165 of 30.04.2004, p. 1 corrected and republished in OJ L 191 , 28.05.2004, p.1 (hereafter: Regulation (EC) No 882/2004)

reporting monthly to the central level. Five Regional Veterinary Stations under the local CAs, cover the most remote areas with a local office.

Private practitioners contracted by the CCA perform certain official tasks including ante-mortem inspections in poultry farms and ante-mortem and post mortem inspections in slaughterhouses.

Further information on the structure and functions of the CCA of Cyprus is available at website <http://www.moa.gov.cy>

The Department of Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for farm registration, for the approval of egg packing centres and for the controls on eggs marketing. They are also responsible for the approval of subsidies to farmers.

Police officers are involved in animal welfare controls on transport in collaboration with the local CAs and have the exclusive competency to apply sanctions in this field.

Internal Audits

Formal internal audits as required by Article 4 (6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 are not yet organised and the CCA indicated that they are in the process of holding meetings to organise and promote these.

The CCA pointed out that supervision is performed through the review of the inspection reports and the summaries of activities which are sent monthly from the local CAs.

Two officials from local CAs have been appointed as coordinators for specific categories of establishments, one for red meat and one for poultry plants, with the task of supervising the establishments throughout the Country, both for the approval and for random inspections jointly with the relevant local CA.

Training

Training for all levels of the CA staff has been organised since 2001 by the CCA and is ongoing and covered the animal welfare issues relevant to this mission. The officials met during the visits provided several certificates relevant to their training.

5.2. Legislation

The CCA informed the inspection team that the relevant EU animal welfare legislation has been transposed into the national legislation. From a review of a selection of the transposing legislation the mission team noted that:

- There are no derogations concerning on farm slaughter of animals for own consumption (Article 9(2) of Directive 93/119/EC). A representative from the CCA indicated that for this reason animals can only be slaughtered in slaughterhouses.

It was also noted that certain provisions are additional to EU legislation:

- The national legislation transposing Directive 99/74/EC on laying hens does not include a transitional period for the requirements of Article 4 (alternative systems), which according to Directive 99/74/EC will not be mandatory on all holdings until 1.1.2007.
- All animal handlers at red meat slaughterhouses must apply for a licence which is granted by the local CAs.
- All transporters, including those transporting animals for less than 50 km (Article 1(2)(b) of Directive 91/628/EEC) are registered, and the registration procedure comprises the inspection and approval of road vehicles.

5.3. Measures supplementary to farm inspections

Since 2001 the CCA provided farmers with information, advice and instructions in the form of seminars, lectures, leaflets and articles in specialized magazines. In September 2004 the CCA sent a letter to all egg producers with a copy of the legislation and an explanatory leaflet, together with an application form for their registration. In December 2004 all pig farmers received a similar letter highlighting the legal requirements with the relevant attachments of legislation and leaflet. Several examples of the above mentioned documentation were seen and all the farmers met were well aware of the EU and national animal welfare requirements.

The local CAs and the CCA are consulted by the relevant planning authority of the municipalities whenever an application for a new farm or for an extension or major refurbishments of existing holdings is presented. The relevant local CA must provide an opinion concerning animal hygiene, health and welfare aspects.

Farmers can apply for subsidies in the framework of a national rural development plan. For pig farmers, the application is based either on the reduction of the number of pigs or on the adoption of group housing for sows (according to Council Directive 91/630/EEC and national legislation, this requirement will become mandatory from 2013). Concerning egg producers, subsidies can be granted if they meet certain animal health standards and all animal welfare requirements. The above must be certified by the competent local CA and accompany the application by the farmer to the Department of Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. However, in relation to the two farms visited, where certification had been obtained, the mission team noted that certain requirements were not in compliance with the legislation or with the statements in the certificates. In particular:

- The certification concerning one pig farm stated that group housing of sows started from 33 days after service, while the legal requirement is 28 days (Article 3(4)(a) of Directive 93/119/EEC).
- The certification relevant to an alternative farm stated that hens were killed at the end of the laying cycle with carbon dioxide, while the owner stated that the live hens were distributed among neighbours. The certificate also indicated that the barn was in compliance with the animal

welfare requirements of Directives 98/58/EC and 99/74/EC, although the mission team noted that the requirement for perches has not been properly assessed.

5.4. Farm inspection programme

Inspections on farm are organised by the local CAs on the basis of a circular note from the CCA indicating a minimum of one visit per year. On farm inspections for animal welfare are usually combined with checks for other purposes.

It was noted that the number of inspections performed was above the minimum required and included all categories of farms, i.e. also the smallest subsistence farms.

In September 2004, a survey was carried out in the laying hen sector in the course of the procedure for registration (Commission Directive 2002/4/EC¹⁰) and the maximum capacity for each farm was calculated.

In December 2004 another survey was carried out of all pig farms in order to provide the CCA with an overview, in particular regarding stocking densities. On this occasion the local CAs completed a form for each farm, providing the measurements of the pens, the number of animals and other basic information to be used during follow-up inspections.

5.5. Holdings with laying hens

Registration of holdings

Holdings with laying hens were registered at the end of 2004 and the information required by the Annex to Directive 2002/4/EC was available at both central and district levels.

Inspections

In relation to inspections, guidance in the form of checklists was provided, but there was no clarification on how to verify certain requirements such as the measurements of the floor slope of cages and, in relation to alternative systems, how to assess perches and maximum capacity. The CCA indicated that in order to comply with the space allowances of Article 5 of Directive 99/74/EC, egg producers reduced the number of hens per cage.

The following points were noted in relation to controls carried out:

- Shortcomings not detected by the CA, but present on the farms visited, included lack of an alarm for artificial ventilation systems (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC) and forced moulting of hens at the end of the production cycle, which is contrary to the provisions of points 15 and

¹⁰ Commission Directive 2002/4/EC of 30 January 2002 on the registration of establishments keeping laying hens, covered by Council Directive 1999/74/EC, OJ L 30 of 31.1.2002, p. 44 (hereafter: Directive 2002/4/EC).

16 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC in relation to feeding and watering.

- In the holding with caged hens visited, the local CA was not able to assess the slope of the floor of the cages. In relation to the alternative system visited, the local CA did not carry out an accurate inspection and in particular the measurement of feeders and drinkers was inaccurate and perches were not measured. The assessment of the capacity for that farm was based on the floor space and on the number of nests provided, but did not take into account the additional limiting factors specified in Article 4 of Directive 99/74/EC, such as perches, feeders and drinkers.
- Inspection reports highlighted overcrowding in battery cages. However, the recommendations for correction were without deadlines and had been repeated at subsequent visits. In the farm with caged system visited, the problem had not been corrected.
- The lack of claw-shortening devices in battery cages (Article 5(1)(6) of Directive 99/74/EC), although detected, had not been corrected. The CCA indicated that this is a general shortcoming for old cage systems in Cyprus and that they had not been able to provide any advice to farmers on this issue.

5.6. Holdings with pigs

In order to comply with Article 5a of Directive 91/629/EEC requiring animal welfare training to be made available to stock persons attending pigs, seminars for pig farmers have been organised every year since 2001 by the CCA.

Concerning inspections, guidance in the form of a specific checklist was provided to inspectors but those instructions did not elaborate on how to verify many of the requirements. It was noted that:

- Shortcomings such as inadequate care for sick and injured pigs (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC), lack of material for manipulation and investigation (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 91/630/EEC) and lack of an alarm for artificial ventilation systems (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC), although present on the farms, had not been identified by the CA during the visits made with the inspection team. Additionally, the measurements of pens were inaccurate, as the floor space occupied by feeders, troughs and other obstructions was not subtracted from the overall area.
- The most common deficiencies highlighted in the inspection reports were in relation to the state of repair of buildings (point 9 of Directive 98/58/EC), record keeping for veterinary medicines (point 5 of Directive 98/58/EC) and space allowances (Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 91/630/EEC). No deadlines had been set for correction of these deficiencies and in some cases oral recommendations had been given. Where the recommendations were written, these were repeated at the follow-up inspections as the shortcomings had not been corrected.

5.7. Animal welfare during transport

Information concerning the welfare requirements for transport was provided by the CCA to the local CAs and to farmers, transporters, police officials and slaughterhouse managers and staff in the form of leaflets, seminars, lectures and articles in specialized magazines. The information provided generally repeats the legal texts and does not provide further clarification on issues such as the fitness of animals for transport (Article 3(b) of Directive 91/628/EEC).

Registration of transporters

All livestock transporters in Cyprus have been registered and the register includes the details of the transporter with an identification code and the plate of the vehicle. The certificate of vehicle approval, which is provided to transporters by the CA, indicates the species of animals that can be transported and the dimensions of the loading area of the vehicle. The vehicle approval is valid for one year with the exception of those vehicles approved for transporting animals for more than eight hours that must be re-inspected every two years. The inspection of vehicles was made with the support of a specific checklist that included the requirements for vehicles transporting animals for more than eight hours (Council Regulation (EC) No 411/98¹¹).

Transport checks

In order to comply with Article 8 of Directive 91/628/EEC, the CCA requested the local CAs to perform controls at places of departure, during transport and at destination on an adequate sample of the animals transported each year.

In relation to places of departure, the CA indicated that controls are performed on farm on 100% of consignments in the context of the veterinary certification of animals.

In relation to checks during transport, these are only performed at the port approved for live animals' movements and the CA indicated that such controls are limited to the documentation, while the animals are checked at unloading at the farms of destination. These can be reached within two hours.

In relation to controls at destination, random inspections on national transport, made using specific checklists, are performed at slaughterhouses. Concerning long distance transport, the CCA indicated that given the low number of consignments of animals arriving from other Member States, controls are performed on 100% of consignments at places of destination.

The following issues were noted:

¹¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 411/98 of 16 February 1998 on additional animal protection standards applicable to road vehicles used for the carriage of livestock on journeys exceeding eight hours, OJ L 52 of 21.2.1998, p. 8.

- In relation to controls at places of departure for long distance transport, route plans concerning consignments of pigs to Greece were approved although some details were missing and, in particular, the estimated journey time indicated was incorrect. The same incorrect information on the journey time was entered in TRACES¹². The CCA explained that the time spent on Ro-Ro ferry was not taken into account because if they did then the maximum travelling time expires during the sea crossing and there are no facilities in Greece to rest animals as required by the legislation (Chapter VII (7)(b) of Directive 91/628/EEC). No letter had been sent to the Greek CCA in relation to this issue. Route plans were not returned to the CA of the place of origin (last indent of Article 5 (A)(2)(d)(ii) of Directive 91/628/EEC) and no action had been taken to ensure that transporters comply with this obligation.
- With regard to national transport, road vehicles were not provided with ramps for loading and unloading the animals. Ramps were available on farm and at slaughterhouses but these were not always adequate as they could not be adjusted to the height of the lorry (Chapter I (4) of the Annex to Directive 91/628/EEC).
- In relation to checks performed on the means of transport at destination, controls had been performed in slaughterhouses as random checks. In 2005 a targeted check was organised by a local CA together with Police officers in a slaughterhouse and this resulted in three transporters being fined for overstocking.

5.8. Animal welfare within slaughterhouses

Inspections in slaughterhouses are carried out twice a year by the local CA sometimes jointly with the relevant co-ordinator. In order to assist inspectors the CCA issued a guideline and a checklist specifically designed for animal welfare. The guideline, which has been based on a Council of Europe Recommendation¹³, has been distributed also to the slaughterhouse managers, and provides practical instructions on the use of electrical parameters for stunning the different species, recommendations on the maximum stun-to-stick time and clarification on the signs of effective stunning. The CCA had also organised seminars and lectures and published articles in specialised magazines in order to spread information on welfare requirements at slaughter.

The CCA indicated that they were in the process of planning re-inspections in all slaughterhouses in relation to their approval, as required by Article 3 of

¹² TRACES Trade Control and Expert System: application linking all Member States and which assists controls by allowing tracing of animal movements.

¹³ Recommendation No R(91)7 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the slaughter of animals (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 June 1991 at the 460th meeting of the Ministries' Deputies).

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004¹⁴ which also incorporates animal welfare aspects.

In some poultry slaughterhouses a checklist different from the one designed specifically for animal welfare was used. This had been drawn up for public health checks but also included the main aspects in relation to animal welfare. It was sufficient for this purpose.

Overall the facilities of the establishments and the handling of animals in the slaughterhouses visited by the FVO team were satisfactory. The maintenance of the stunning equipment was documented and inspections were recorded on checklists. Most deficiencies highlighted were in relation to hygiene problems. However, the following shortcomings had not been identified by the CA:

- The restraining equipment used for goats hampered the proper application of the electrical tongs (point 3 of Annex B to Directive 93/119/EC). As a consequence, three out of six animals received pre-stun shocks before being stunned.
- The ante-mortem records showed that sheep and goats with fractured limbs were regularly slaughtered. The CA had not investigated if the injuries had occurred before the transport and in any case there was no equipment, such as a trolley, to transport injured animals to the place of stunning nor an instrument available to kill them on the lorry or in the lairages (Annex A(I)(6) to Directive 93/119/EC).
- In the lairages of the poultry slaughterhouse, the cleaning with high pressure water of the lorries was carried out in the proximity of the unloaded crates with live birds still inside, causing unnecessary distress to the animals (Articles 3 and 4 of Directive 93/119/EC); water bath stunners were not provided with a system to wet the shackle-to-leg contacts which does not ensure proper passage of the current (Annex C (II)(3)(B)(3) of Directive 93/119/EC).

Where deficiencies had been detected, these were followed up but no sanctions had been applied. In 2005, a recommendation had been given in relation to the maintenance of the electrical equipment for stunning animals in the slaughterhouse for red meat species, which had been subsequently corrected. The CA pointed out that an oral recommendation had also been given to the slaughterhouse manager to improve the floor of the corridor leading from the unloading area to the lairages, that was steep and slippery (Annex A(II)(7) to Directive 93/119/EC), but this had not been corrected.

5.9. Reporting and sanctioning systems

The local CAs are obliged to provide each month a summary of the activities performed in all fields of animal welfare, together with a copy of the

¹⁴ Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for on the hygiene of foodstuffs, OJ L 139 of 30.4.2004, p. 55 corrected and republished in OJ L 226 of 25.06.2004, p.22.

inspection reports. The CCA prepares a national quarterly and annual report. All the above documentation was available both at the offices visited and at central level.

Each inspection was documented by the appropriate checklist, and filing of all documentation relevant to each farm was well organised and easily retrievable at the offices visited.

In relation to the obligation for Member States to submit to the Commission a report concerning farm inspections (Commission Decision 2000/50/EC¹⁵), the CCA indicated that this report will be drawn up on the basis of the information provided by the local CAs. It was noted that, although the above documentation is quite detailed, it does not follow the format of the categorisation of infringements as laid down in the Annex to Decision 2000/50/EC.

In relation to the sanctioning system for animal welfare, sanctions are laid down in the national framework legislation (Animal Welfare Law No. 46(1) of 1994). The officials from the local CAs have the legal power to apply sanctions, except in the field of transport, where they can only refer the case to the Court, but cannot serve a fine directly. Only Police officers can impose fines in such cases. At central level it was agreed not to apply sanctions in case of infringements in order to allow stake holders time to adapt to the new requirements. A policy of giving recommendations had therefore been established and was still applied. The only examples of sanctions applied in 2005 were the three transporters fined for overstocking.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Competent Authority

- (1) The structure and the resources at all levels of the CA were adequate. The system of supervision in place ensured uniformity of procedures; however, internal audits, as laid down in Article 4(6) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, are not yet organised.
- (2) The involvement of the CA with other implementing authorities represents an additional tool to ensure animal welfare standards are respected.
- (3) Training of staff was well developed and covered the different levels of the CA; however it had been insufficient to ensure adequate implementation of certain requirements, in particular the practical steps necessary to carry out many of the inspections.

¹⁵ Commission Decision 2000/50/EC of 17 December 1999 concerning minimum requirements for the inspection of holdings on which animals are kept for farming purposes, OJ L 19 of 25.1.2000, p. 51 (hereafter: Decision 2000/50).

6.2. Legislation

- (1) Certain national legal measures and transposing EU directives go beyond EU requirements, such as: all alternative systems for laying hens must meet all the requirements without the benefit of a transitional period (Article 4(2) of Directive 99/74/EC); the mandatory licensing of animal handlers; and the registration of all transporters, including those transporting animals for less than 50 km. In addition, the requirement for vehicle inspections and approval is already in line with Regulation (EC) No. 1/2005 which will come into force on 5.1.2007.

6.3. Measures supplementary to farm inspections

- (1) The information provided to stakeholders was adequate.
- (2) The involvement of the CA in the planning permission procedure for farm building is a useful measure to ensure that minimum animal welfare standards are respected.
- (3) The national rural development plan represents an additional measure to encourage farmers to comply with welfare legislation and in particular to move to group housing systems for sows in advance of the deadline set by EU legislation. However, the CA had certified compliance even though certain requirements were not respected.

6.4. Farm inspection programme

- (1) The programme of inspection was adequate and the inclusion of the small subsistence farms ensures that the programme covers a representative sample of all categories of farms.

6.5. Holdings with laying hens

- (1) The registration of laying hen farms was in compliance with the requirements of Directive 2002/4/EC.
- (2) Supervision was adequate overall with most deficiencies detected and followed up.
- (3) Guidance for inspectors was insufficiently detailed on certain requirements and as a result there were inadequate checks of: an alarm for artificial ventilation system (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); perches (Article 4(1)(1)(d) of Directive 99/74/EC); measurements of the floor slope of cages (Article 5(1)(5) of Directive 99/74/EC); feeders and drinkers in alternative systems (Article 4(1)(1)(a) and (b) of Directive 99/74/EC). Also, as a consequence of the lack of guidance or training, the assessment of the capacity in alternative systems did not take into account all the limiting requirements of Article 4 of Directive 99/74/EC and the access to a sufficient quantity of feed and water during a period of forced moulting (Points 15 and 16 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC) were not detected.

- (4) Due to a lack of advice by the CCA on claw shortening devices in cage systems (Article 5(1)(6) of Directive 99/74/EC), flock keepers and the local CAs were not aware of possible solutions to this requirement.
- (5) Follow-up was mostly carried out, but the CA had not yet moved to a stage where they would impose sanctions. This resulted in shortcomings not being corrected and repeated infringements being tolerated, such as the insufficient space allowance in cages (Article 5(1)(1) of Directive 99/74/EC).

6.6. Holdings with pigs

- (1) The availability of training and information to pig farmers complies with the obligations laid down in Article 5a of Directive 91/628/EEC.
- (2) As a consequence of insufficient guidance to inspectors, shortcomings such as inadequate care for sick and injured pigs (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); lack of material for manipulation and investigation (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 91/630/EEC); and lack of an alarm for artificial ventilation systems (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC) had not been detected. The measurement of pens was also inaccurate as obstructions had been included (Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 91/630/EC).
- (3) As the CA had not yet adopted a policy to impose sanctions, shortcomings such as inadequate record keeping of veterinary medicines (point 5 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); insufficient maintenance of buildings (point 9 of Directive 98/58) and insufficient space allowance (Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 91/630/EEC), although identified during the CA checks, were not being corrected.

6.7. Animal welfare during transport

- (1) Registration of transporters was in compliance with the provisions of Article 5(A)(1)(a)(i) of Directive 91/628/EEC and the additional requirements concerning vehicles inspection and approval should facilitate the implementation of Article 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 from 5.1.2007.
- (2) The programme of inspection concerning transport of animals was adequate and the information and checklists provided to inspectors was mostly a good guidance. However, this was insufficient to ensure that suitable equipment for loading and unloading animals is available (Chapter I(A)(4) of the Annex to Directive 91/628/EEC). The issue of the fitness of animals for transport (Article 3(b) of Directive 91/628/EEC) had not been adequately clarified by the CCA and as a result insufficient investigations were carried out when injured animals arrived at slaughterhouses.
- (3) The CA were aware that consignments of pigs sent to Greece were exceeding the journey time, but had not taken sufficient steps to address this issue. As a consequence they did not ensure that journey times and resting periods, as laid down in Chapter VII(7)(b) of the Annex to Directive 91/628/EEC were respected. There was also no system to ensure that route plans are returned after completion of the journey (Article 5(A)(2)(d)(ii), third indent, of Directive 91/628/EEC).

6.8. Animal welfare within slaughterhouses

- (4) The system of supervision in slaughterhouses is adequate, and in particular the role of the two co-ordinators working across the various local CAs provides support for inspectors. However the operation of this system was insufficient to ensure that several shortcomings were detected: the improper restraint for stunning small ruminants (point 3 of Annex B of Directive 93/119/EC); the inadequate provisions for killing injured animals (Annex A(I)(6) to Directive 93/119/EC); the unnecessary excitement of poultry in the lairages (Articles 3 and 4 of Directive 93/119/EC) and the improper passage of current through the shackles (Annex C (II)(3)(B)(3) of Directive 93/119/EC).

6.9. Reporting and sanctioning system

- (1) Reporting from the local CAs to the central level was accurate and punctual; however, the system has not been designed following the categories laid down in Decision 2000/50/EC. Further review and analysis of the information in the reports submitted by the local CAs will be necessary in order for the CCA to produce a report in the appropriate format and to submit it to the commission before the 30 April 2006.
- (2) The sanctioning system has an adequate legal basis but was not yet applied in relation to infringements concerning welfare on farm and at slaughter. It has only been applied once in 2005 in relation to transport infringements.

6.10. Overall conclusion

The system of inspection put in place is overall adequate and is being progressively implemented. Instructions and checklists are largely comprehensive and are effectively used by the local level. Most deficiencies were detected but the lack of emphasis on practical aspects diminished the way in which certain requirements were checked. Follow up actions were scheduled although they were not always sufficient to ensure that deficiencies were corrected.

7. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 13 January 2006 with the CCA and the local CAs. At this meeting the FVO inspection team presented the main findings and conclusions. The CCA provisionally accepted the findings and conclusions presented, and provided further clarification in particular regarding long distance transport. The CCA expressed their concern on the negative impact on the trade of animals with Greece and other Member States of the requirements concerning travelling time and resting periods of animals as laid down in Directive 91/628/EEC and Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, pointing out the isolated geographic position of Cyprus and the lack of facilities at the Greek port to unload and rest animals.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the competent authorities of Cyprus

Within 25 working days of receipt of the final mission report, the Competent Authorities are requested to present a plan of actions, including a timetable for their completion, to address the following recommendations:

- (1) To ensure that a system of internal audits of controls is set up (article 4 (6) of Regulation (EC) n° 882/2004).
- (2) To ensure that, within the training provided to CA staff, the practical steps for inspections are covered so that inspectors carry out their tasks efficiently and competently (Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004).
- (3) To ensure the accuracy of the certification issued by the CA in relation to animal welfare standards on farms (Article 30 (2)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004).
- (4) In relation to holdings with laying hens, to ensure that the sector is aware of solutions to ensure that establishments meet the requirements for claw shortening devices (Article 5(1)(6) of Directive 99/74/EC)
- (5) To take measures so that inspectors, when on holdings with laying hens, adequately check the presence of an alarm for artificial ventilation systems (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); perches, feeders, drinkers, and the capacity in alternative systems (Article 4 of Directive 99/74/EC); floor slope of cages (Article 5(1)(5) of Directive 99/74/EC) and practices which restrict access to feed and water (Points 15 and 16 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC).
- (6) To take stronger follow-up measures to ensure that space allowances in cages for laying hens comply with Article 5(1)(1) of Directive 99/74/EC.
- (7) To take measures so that inspectors, when on holdings with pigs, adequately check that the presence of an alarm for artificial ventilation systems (point 13 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); unobstructed floor area (Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 91/630/EEC; the provisions of adequate care to sick and injured pigs (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); the availability of material for manipulation and investigation (point 4 of the Annex to Directive 91/630/EEC).
- (8) In relation to holdings with pigs, to take stronger follow-up measures to ensure that appropriate records are kept of any medical treatment given to animals (point 5 of the Annex to Directive 98/58/EC); buildings are properly maintained (point 9 of Directive 98/58) and minimum space allowances are respected (Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 91/630/EEC).
- (9) In relation to the transport of animals, to ensure that suitable equipment for loading and unloading animals is available (Chapter I(A)(4) of the Annex to Directive 91/628/EEC), also taking into account Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 Annex I, Chapter II, 2.2.

- (10) Regarding fitness of animals for transport, to ensure that sufficient investigations are made where injured animals arrive at slaughterhouses so that Article 12 and the last sentence of point 6 of Annex A(1) to Directive 93/119/EC, and Article 3(1)(b) of Directive 91/628/EEC are respected.
- (11) To take measures so that journey times and resting periods of animals transported to other Member States, as laid down in Chapter VII (7)(b) of the Annex to Directive 91/628/EEC, are respected (Article 3 (1)(aa) second indent of Directive 91/628/EEC).
- (12) To take measures so that transporters return the route plan after completion of the journeys (Article 5(A)(2)(d)(ii), third indent, of Directive 91/628/EEC).
- (13) In relation to welfare at slaughter, to take measures so that inspectors adequately check and subsequently ensure: the restraint for small ruminants so that the application and operation of electrical stunning is facilitated (point 3 of Annex B of Directive 93/119/EC); the provisions for killing injured animals (Annex A(I)(6) to Directive 93/119/EC); the conditions in which live poultry are held in the lairage, so that unnecessary excitement is avoided (Articles 3 and 4 of Directive 93/119/EC) and the current passing through the shackles in particular through wetting the shackle-to-leg contact (Annex C (II)(3)(B)(3) of Directive 93/119/EC).

9. ADDENDUM TO MISSION REPORT DG(SANCO)/8037/2006

In their comments on a draft version of this report, the CCA provided an initial reaction to the recommendations, where they made the following statements:

- (1) In relation to recommendation 1, the Veterinary Services are in the process of organizing and promoting a system of internal audits controls, which will be implemented later this year.
- (2) In reply to recommendations 2, 5 and 7, within the training provided to the staff of the Veterinary Services a workshop on practical aspects for the inspections is planned for June 2006. Information and guidance will be given to the inspectors during the workshop, so that all the legislative requirements are adequately checked. Particular attention will be given to the recommendations made by the inspection team, which will be discussed in detail.
- (3) In relation to recommendation 3, a circular has been sent to the district veterinary officers. The necessity for accuracy of the certificate issued by the Veterinary Services in relation to animal welfare standards on farms has been pointed out. The District Veterinary Offices have been instructed to issue these certificates in accordance with the findings of inspections carried out on the farms, ensuring that the requirements are respected.
- (4) In relation to recommendation 4, the Veterinary Services are looking into the issue of claw-shortening devices for cage systems and help from experts will be sought. The farmers will be informed and in co-operation with them a deadline will be set for finding a solution.

- (5) In response to recommendations 6 and 8, written recommendations for correction will be given when deficiencies are detected during the inspections, deadlines will be set and regular follow-up inspections will be carried out. In case of non compliance legal measures will be taken.
- (6) In relation to recommendation 9, a letter has been sent to all transporters underlying their obligation to comply with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, Annex I, Chapter II, 2.2. and the requirement to use the proper equipment for loading and unloading animals.
- (7) In response to recommendation 10, relevant instructions have been given to the veterinarians working at the slaughterhouses to investigate all the cases of injured animals. Further instructions concerning the fitness of the animal for transport will be given to the parties involved.
- (8) In response to recommendation 11, a letter has been sent to all animal transporters and other parties involved informing them of the necessity for establishing an official staging point in Greece. Arrangements are in progress concerning the resting of animals after arriving at the port of destination.
- (9) In relation to recommendation 12, all route plans have been returned.
- (10) In response to recommendation 13, compliance with the relevant requirements will be checked and re-evaluated within the framework of slaughterhouses re-inspections for their approval. Relevant instructions have been given to the veterinarians working at the slaughterhouses to investigate all the cases of injured animals arriving at the slaughterhouses. The facilities of the establishments and the handling of animals will be checked during the ante-mortem examination / inspection.