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Working Document
on
animal health conditions for the participation of
birds in international exhibitions in the EU

This document does not necessarily represent the views of the Commission Services.

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A. Background information:

The Association for poultry, bird, rabbit and cavia breeds, represented by the "Entente Européenne d'aviculture et de Cuniculture"¹ have signalled to the Commission that they face difficulties when organising exhibitions with participation of birds from several Member States, as different animal health conditions are required by the various Member States' authorities.

B. Legal situation:

B.1. The basic rules for trade, i.e. movement of animals between Member States are laid down in **Council Directive 92/65/EEC** laying down animal health requirements governing trade in and imports into the Community of animals, semen, ova and embryos not subject to animal health requirements laid down in specific Community rules referred to in Annex A (I) to Directive 90/425/EEC².

Article 4 of Directive 92/65/EEC stipulates that only animals may be placed on the market for the purposes of trade which do not show signs of disease. Moreover they have to come from holdings or areas not excluded from trade on animal health grounds.

'Birds' intended for trade must meet the animal health and certification requirements laid down in Article 7 of Directive 92/65/EEC. Those requirements relate to avian influenza, Newcastle disease and, for certain species, to psittacosis. Birds with the exception of psittacidae must be accompanied by a self-certification by the operator stating that the animals in question do not at the time of dispatch show any obvious signs of disease and that it comes from a holding that is not subject to any animal health restrictions. Psittacidae have to be accompanied by a commercial document signed by the official veterinarian or by the veterinarian responsible for the holding or business of origin and empowered for this purpose by the competent authority.

B.2. More specific legislation has been established for

1. poultry and
2. pet birds

¹ www.entente-ee.com : founded in 1938, 28 nations and 2,5 Mill members

² OJ L 268, 14.09.92, p.52.

B.2.1. As regards poultry, specific animal health conditions are laid down in **Council Directive 2009/158/EC** (ex Dir.90/539/EEC codified version) on animal health conditions governing intra-Community trade in, and imports from third countries of, poultry and hatching eggs³. This Directive defines '**poultry**' as fowl, turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks, geese, quails, pigeons, pheasants, partridges and ratites (Ratitae) reared or kept in captivity for breeding, the production of meat or eggs for consumption, or for re-stocking supplies of game.

This Directive does not apply to poultry for exhibitions, shows or contests and does therefore not cover risks related to birds participating in these events. Therefore, the general rules of Council Directive 92/65/EEC apply.

B.2.2. Article 3 of **Regulation (EC) No 998/2003** of the European Parliament and of the Council on the animal health requirements applicable to the non-commercial movement of pet animals and amending Council Directive 92/65/EEC⁴ defines pets as "animals of the species listed in Annex I which are accompanying their owners or a natural person responsible for such animals on behalf of the owner during their movement and are not intended to be sold or transferred to another owner". Annex I of Reg. 998/2003 refers to all birds except poultry covered by Council Directive 2009/158/EC and those birds that are covered by 92/65/EEC.

Regulation (EC) No 998/2003 does not apply to birds participating in a bird exhibition, because in this case the primary aim of the movement is to bring the birds to the exhibition. Therefore, it is the owner that accompanies the birds rather than vice versa, when birds accompany the owner during his travels. Therefore, the general rules of Council Directive 92/65/EEC apply.

C. Conclusion:

The above legal provisions concern trade in and movements of birds between Member States. The animal health risks associated with bird exhibitions with EU wide participation have under current law to be managed by individual Member States' authorities taking into account that under practical conditions bird exhibitions are often held for both, trade and for simple exhibition purposes. Taking also into account the potentially different epidemiological situation in hosting Member States, the Member States have however agreed that it would be advisable that also the birds moving from a holding within the hosting Member State to an EU bird exhibition (national movement), and thus not legally subject to the provisions of Directive 92/65/EEC, meet the conditions laid down in Article 7 of that Directive.

³ OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 74.

⁴ OJ L 146, 13.6.2003, p. 1.

D. Steps taken and final position:

The Commission led discussions with Member States at the meetings of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCFCAH) to identify possible problems experienced in this area and collected information and comments on this issue including on the national implementation. Feedback was received from Member States, EEA countries, the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and AVEC (Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU countries).

The Member States agreed on the content of this working document at the meeting of SCFCAH of 6 July 2011.

It should nevertheless be made clear that this working document is not legally binding and it does not prevail over existing legal obligations as regards control measures for certain diseases and compliance with general and specific animal welfare conditions that are adopted at EU and national level. Moreover in case the disease situation changes or if the outcome of a risk assessment so warrants, the implementation of more stringent animal health conditions may be necessary.

ANNEX

Working document on animal health conditions for the participation of birds in international exhibitions in the EU

1. Introduction

The Association for poultry, bird, rabbit and cavia breeds, represented by the "Entente Européenne d'aviculture et de Cuniculture"⁵ have informed the Commission about difficulties when organising bird exhibitions with participation of birds from several Member States. Different animal health conditions are applied by the authorities of the hosting Member State.

The animal health risks associated with bird exhibitions with EU wide participation have under current legislation to be managed by individual Member States' authorities. It was therefore agreed that the Commission facilitates the discussion to agree on a document helping to avoid future problems in diverging animal health conditions which may pose unnecessary obstacles to such bird exhibitions while safeguarding animal health.

However, this document is not legally binding and it does not prevail over existing legal obligations as regards control measures for certain avian diseases and compliance with general and specific animal welfare conditions that are adopted at EU and national level.

In case the disease situation changes or if the outcome of a risk assessment so warrants, the implementation of more stringent animal health conditions may be necessary.

2. General conditions

2.1. For the purpose of this document, "bird exhibition" should mean an exhibition in a Member State at which birds originating in or coming from other than the hosting Member State are displayed to the public.

2.2. The organiser of the bird exhibition should plan the bird exhibition sufficiently in advance to ensure that the necessary provisions are in place.

⁵ www.entente-ee.com

2.3. For the purpose of tracing the movements of birds participating in the bird exhibition, the organiser should keep records containing the following information:

- name, address and telephone number of the participants
- number, species and identification of exhibited birds
- number, species and identification of sold birds
- name, address and telephone number of buyer of birds

The records should be kept by the organiser for at least 6 months after the bird exhibition and be made available to the competent authority upon request.

2.4. The organiser should entrust a responsible veterinarian (and possibly an alternate) with a good knowledge of the sector and specific professional expertise in avian diseases and animal welfare with the supervision of the bird exhibition.

2.5. Without prejudice to Commission Decision 2005/734/EC⁶ on biosecurity measures in areas at particular risk for HPAI H5N1 introduction, birds should be displayed without coming into contact with wild birds or with feed, water, bedding or other utensils which have been in contact with wild birds.

3. Requirements for the holding of origin

Owners and/or keepers of birds which participate in bird exhibitions should keep a holding register recording date, number and species of birds present on the holding as well as the numbers of identified birds. In addition, movements of birds to and from the holding should be recorded.

Details on health problems, treatments and vaccinations should be included in the holding register.

4. Identification of birds

4.1. Birds participating in bird exhibitions should be properly identified. The standard identification method is a closed leg-ring. Psittacidae should in any case be identified.

In the case of an electronic identification system (transponder/chip) the bird owner/keeper should provide the means necessary for reading the transponder/chip at the time of identity checks.

⁶ OJ L 274, 20.10.2005, p. 105.

4.2. For birds falling under the CITES legislation identification and the respective documents should be provided.

5. Animal health status of the birds

5.1. The birds participating in bird exhibitions should:

- (a) come from a holding which is not subject to restrictions under measures to be applied to control avian influenza as defined in Directive 2005/94/EC⁷ or Newcastle disease.
- (b) come from a holding which is situated in an area which is not subject to restrictions under measures to be applied to control avian influenza as defined in Directive 2005/94/EC or Newcastle disease.

5.2. In addition, *psittacidae* should not come from a holding nor have been in contact with birds from a holding on which psittacosis (*Chlamydophila psittaci*) has been diagnosed. The period of prohibition since the last recorded case and the period of treatment under veterinary supervision must be at least two months.

6. Vaccination status

6.1. Newcastle disease

(a) The organiser of the bird exhibition shall ensure that racing pigeons (preferably also pigeons for other uses) participating in the exhibition have been vaccinated against PPMV-1 (Avian Paramyxovirus 1 pigeon variant) according to the manufacturer's instructions with an inactivated vaccine during the last 6 months and not later than 21 days before entering the bird exhibition.

(b) If the hosting Member State requires all or some bird species listed as 'poultry' in Directive 2009/158/EC i.e. fowl, turkeys, guinea fowl, ducks, geese, quails, pheasants, partridges and ratites to be vaccinated against Newcastle disease when participating in bird exhibitions, the birds should be vaccinated against that disease according to the manufacturer's instructions with an inactivated vaccine for which an marketing authorisation exists for the species concerned during the last 6 months and not later than 21 days before entering the bird exhibition.

⁷ OJL 10, 14.1.2006, p.16.

(c) In any case, where a hosting Member State carries out routine vaccination against Newcastle disease in poultry, birds vaccinated against Newcastle disease according to the provisions of paragraph (b) should be permitted to participate in the bird exhibition.

(d) The organiser of the bird exhibition might preferably also require that the birds referred to in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) originate from holdings where all birds present on the holding have been vaccinated against Newcastle disease or PPMV-1.

(e) The bird owner/keeper should provide for an attestation by a veterinarian on the performance of the vaccination according to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) and as appropriate, to paragraph (d).

6.2. Avian influenza (as defined in Directive 2005/94/EC)

(a) Birds participating in bird exhibitions should not have been vaccinated against avian influenza during the past 12 months, unless

(b) the participation in bird exhibitions of birds vaccinated against avian influenza under an EU approved vaccination plan against that disease should be permitted under that plan.

7. Animal health documentation for movement of birds to and from bird exhibitions

7.1. Movement of birds to the bird exhibition:

(a) Birds other than psittacidae

Birds participating in bird exhibitions should be accompanied by a self-certification issued by the owner, based on the records maintained in accordance with Section 2, stating that the birds do not at the time of dispatch show any obvious signs of disease and that the holding is not subject to any animal health restrictions according to the conditions set out in Section 4.

(b) Psittacidae

Psittacidae participating in bird exhibitions should be accompanied by a commercial document signed by the official veterinarian or by the veterinarian responsible for the holding or business of origin and empowered for this purpose

by the competent authority confirming the animal health conditions set out in Section 4.

(c) Animal health attestation

The organiser of the bird exhibition, if deemed necessary, might require an animal health attestation to accompany the birds to the exhibition referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) above confirming that the animal health conditions set out in Section 4 are met and which is signed by the veterinarian responsible for the holding of origin and authorised for this purpose by the competent authority.

(d) Pre-entry conditions

The birds referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b) above should not enter the bird exhibition until the responsible veterinarian has carried out with satisfactory results checks referred to in 8.1.(a) and (b).

7.2. Movement of birds to the Member State of origin or to another Member State

(a) The competent authority may decide to register the bird exhibition as a holding on a temporary basis.

(b) Birds may be returned from the bird exhibition to the Member State of origin or be moved to another Member State under the conditions of paragraphs 7.1.(a), (b) or (c) provided that no animal health restrictions have been imposed by the competent authority.

8. Veterinary supervision and cleansing and disinfection

8.1. The responsible veterinarian should

- (a) carry out documentary and identity checks on the birds prior to entry to the bird exhibition,
- (b) monitor the clinical conditions of the birds upon entry and during the exhibition,
- (c) be vigilant towards the protection of animals.

8.2. The organiser should ensure

- (a) the availability of the necessary equipment for cleansing and disinfection,
- (b) the safe disposal of litter, bedding, faeces, not consumed feed and other materials of bird origin.