President: Alberto Laddomada.

All the Member States were present, the following Member States were absent for some points: Poland, Portugal, Romania and Finland but represented by other Member States.

1. Information from the Czech Republic, France and Germany on the avian influenza situation in poultry and wild birds.

The Czech representative gave a short update of the situation. The first outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) of the H5N1 subtype was confirmed on 21 June 2007 in a turkey farm in Tisova in the Pardubický region. The second outbreak was confirmed on 27 June 2007 in a broiler farm in Norin about 4 km from the first outbreak. Within the 3-km protection zone established around the second outbreak, two further outbreaks were confirmed on 11 July in chicken breeding farms located in Chocen and in Netreby. All poultry present in the holdings were culled and further protection and surveillance zones were established.

A total of 271 samples were collected from wild birds in the outbreak areas until the 14th of July and the investigations are still ongoing.

On 28 June 2007 a swan found dead in the district Břeclav in Jihomoravský region has been tested positive for the virus.

The French representative briefly updated the Committee. On 5 July 2007 the National Reference Laboratory confirmed HPAI H5N1 virus in 3 swans found dead during routine surveillance, near the pond of Villers, Moselle department, in the north eastern part of France. Control and monitoring areas have been established. 96 further birds were tested and analysed with the negative results.

The German representative gave a brief overview of the current situation in Germany. The virus of avian influenza has been detected in 7 areas. 265 cases have been reported in wild birds in 2007 till now, most of them in the Saxony area.

2. Information from the Community Reference Laboratory for avian influenza in Weybridge on the wild birds surveillance performed in Member States during 2006 (SANCO/10194/2007) and in the first trimester of 2007.
A representative of the Community Reference Laboratory for avian influenza and Newcastle disease in Weybridge made a presentation on the issue. During 2006, a total of 143,915 birds were tested in all Member States and Bulgaria. In addition, Romania tested approximately 5,103 birds and Switzerland tested a total of 1,529 birds. This total number of birds tested was treble the number of wild birds tested in 2005. During the first trimester a total of 23,979 samples from wild birds were tested in the EU 27 and no positive case for HPAI H5N1 subtype was detected.

3. Exchange of views on biosecurity measures applied in Member States in relation to avian influenza according to Commission Decision 2005/734/EC.

Document SANCO/10198/2007 has been distributed during the meeting: "Information on biosecurity measures applied on poultry holdings in relation to avian influenza received from the Member States and other countries". The Commission representative informed the Committee that almost all Member States have provided the information to be included in the document. Member States were invited to send any comments by email.

4. Exchange of views on the bluetongue situation in the EU.

The Belgian representative made a presentation on the issue. On the 17th of July 2007 the national reference laboratory confirmed a case in the municipality of Oelegem (Antwerp) in a holding previously infected by bluetongue. The entire territory of Belgium is considered as an infected zone. No positive results in sentinel animals have been reported till now. The vector free season ended on 30 March 2007. The protocol signed between the 5 Member States with serotype 8 to facilitate trade has elapsed.

The German representative updated the Committee on the bluetongue situation in North-Rhine Westphalia. A total of 6,468 sentinel animals have been tested with negative results in Jun 2007.

The document "Joint COPA-COGECA, UECBV and FESASS statement following the discussions which took place on 9 July 2007 as regards the future of the management of the bluetongue situation in EU" has been distributed during the meeting for information.


Various missions took place during the last few months in Bulgaria. According to the conclusions of the last one that took place on 22-27 April 2007, the responsible authorities in Bulgaria are in position to fulfil the Community provisions relating to monitoring and control of the establishments that produce milk and meat. In the earlier missions there were reported certain shortcomings in the monitoring system. (See also point 12A)

6. Information from the Commission and exchange of views concerning the relevant rules for the import of pet food.
Document SANCO/10205/2007 has been distributed during the meeting: "Overview of rules for the import of pet food under Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 and their application in relation to China". This document follows up two Chief Veterinary Officers (CVO) meetings. In those meetings some concerns were expressed about the relevant import rules, specifically on the list of establishments of Chinese origin that was forwarded to several Member States in relation to imports of petfood and raw material for petfood production. Commission has informed the Member States that a Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspection to China in the area of petfood production has already been scheduled to take place in 2008. The Commission proposed to discuss the matter if necessary in more detail during the next animal by-products working group.


The Commission distributed the Better Training for Safer Food Annual Report 2006 and presented a DVD film on this new and ambitious initiative run by the DG Health and Consumer Protection. It aims at providing a Community training strategy for official Member States safety controls staff, and for third country participants in compliance with EU standards in the areas of food law, feed law, animal health rules, animal welfare rules, plant health rules.

7A. Exchange of views on imports of products of animal origin from Brazil.

The document "Assessment of the report made by the Irish Farmers Association of their visit to Brazil in May 2007" was distributed during the meeting. The document was prepared by the Commission in response to the report published by the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) regarding practices of the Brazilian beef industry. The document summarises the Commission's comments on each of IFA's main allegations. Overall the report concludes that their allegations are to a large extent based on an incorrect interpretation of EC requirements for beef imports. In the subsequent discussion, several technical issues, including residue monitoring programmes were raised and discussed by the Member States.

8. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on the evolution of animal diseases in the Community and in third countries.

No item raised.

9. Exchange of views and possible opinion on a draft Commission Decision laying down the animal and public health conditions and model certificates for imports of certain meat products and treated stomachs, bladders and intestines for human consumption from third countries and repealing Decision 2005/432/EC. (Doc. SANCO/10104/2007-Rev. 8)


The specific treatments laid down for each third country by Decision 2005/432/EC are established in order to eliminate the potential animal health risk carried by the fresh meat used in the preparation of the meat products. Therefore, from the animal health point of view, processed stomachs, bladders and intestines should be treated with the same specific treatments as provided for in Decision 2005/432/EC and consequently submitted to the veterinary certification for their import into the Community.

In order to introduce the new requirements in the EU legislation and ensure clarity, coherence, simplification and transparency, it is opportune to repeal Decision 2005/432/EC and replace it with this draft proposal.

**Vote: postponed.**


Commission Regulation (EC) No 745/2004 lays down measures with regard to imports of products of animal origin for personal consumption. The products covered by this Regulation are defined in Commission Decision 2002/349/EC.


Following the repeal of Commission Decision 2002/349/EC and in order to ensure clarity, coherence, simplification and transparency in Community legislation, it is appropriate to reword the scope of Commission Regulation (EC) No 745/2004.

The vote was postponed to allow more time for the proposal to be discussed with Custom Authorities.

**Vote: postponed.**


This draft proposal had been presented and discussed during the meetings of this Committee on 3 & 4 of May 2007 (agenda item 16) and 5 & 6 July 2007 (agenda item 27). At those meetings, Member States had been asked to study the proposal and to send any comments to the Commission Services. This new version of the proposal takes into account the comments received. Member States asked for more time to further consider the issue.

**Vote: postponed.**
12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on emergency measures applying to fishery products imported from Albania and intended for human consumption. (Doc. SANCO/10181/2007)

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, the necessary measures must be adopted where it is evident that food imported from a third country is likely to constitute a serious risk to human health, animal health or the environment and that such risk cannot be contained satisfactorily by means of measures taken by the Member State(s) concerned.

A recent Community inspection in Albania as a follow up of a previous mission carried out in 2006 has again revealed a limited capacity of the Albanian authorities to carry out the necessary checks, in particular to detect histamine in fish and fishery products.

As excessive levels of histamine in fishery products constitute a serious risk for human health. Appropriate measures applicable to import of fishery products from Albania are necessary to ensure effective and uniform protection in all Member States.

These measures are temporarily authorized to allow the Albanian authorities to build their own check capacity.

Vote: unanimous in favour.


Commission Decision 2007/31/EC lays down transitional measures as regards the dispatch of certain products of the meat and milk sectors from Bulgaria to other Member States. These products shall only be dispatched from those processing establishments listed in the Annex of that Decision.

Bulgaria has requested to add 12 new establishments on the list of the Annex of Commission Decision 2007/31/EC. The competent authorities have given guarantees that these establishments are now fully in compliance with EU rules.

Decision 2007/31/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.

Vote: unanimous in favour. The Commission asked the Member States whether on a basis of an agreement between the Members of this Committee, if they agree that those 12 Bulgarian establishments could start already trading their products within the Community before the adoption of the Decision. All the Member States agreed.


The list of border inspection posts for veterinary checks on live animals and animal products from third countries, approved by Commission Decision 2001/881/EC which includes the TRACES unit number for every border inspection post, should be updated to take account in particular of developments in certain Member States and of Community inspections.

Following a satisfactory inspection in accordance with Decision 2001/881//EC, additional border inspection post at Civitavecchia, Italy should be added to the list of border inspection posts. Following communications from Germany and the United Kingdom, border
inspection posts at Weil/Rhein Mannheim, Germany and Ipswich, the United Kingdom, should be deleted from the list of border inspection posts.

In addition, the list border inspection posts should be updated to take account of recent changes regarding categories of animals or products that can be checked at certain border inspection posts already approved in accordance with Decision 2001/881/EC and the organisation of inspection centres at those posts.

The list of TRACES units laid down in Commission Decision 2002/459/EC which includes the TRACES unit number for each border inspection post in the Community, should accordingly be updated to take account of any relevant changes and to maintain an identical list to that in Decision 2001/881/EC.


Vote: in favour, Poland represented by Austria, Portugal by Slovakia, Romania by Slovenia and Finland by Sweden.

14. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision laying down a list of third countries from which poultry, hatching eggs, day-old chicks, specified pathogen-free eggs, meat, minced meat and mechanically separated meat of poultry including ratites and wild game-birds, eggs and egg products may be imported into and transit through the Community and the applicable veterinary certification conditions, and repealing Decisions 93/342/EC, 94/438/EC and 2006/696/EC. (Doc. SANCO/10011/2007-Rev.2)

This draft proposal has been presented and discussed during the meeting of this Committee on 5 and 6 July 2007 (agenda item 32). This new version of the proposal takes into account the comments received by the Member States. During this meeting some Member States raised specific issues and the Commission asked them to send any comments by email with the intention to present an opinion an updated version of the proposal in a future Committee.

Vote: postponed.


Commission Decision 2006/415/EC concerning certain protection measures in relation to highly pathogenic avian influenza of the subtype H5N1 in poultry in the Community and repealing Decision 2006/135/EC lays down certain protection measures to be applied in order to prevent the spread of that disease, including the establishment of areas A and B following a suspected or confirmed outbreak of the disease.

Following an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza of H5N1 subtype in a poultry farm on 20 June 2007 in the Czech Republic the Commission has adopted Decisions 2007/434/EC and 2007/454/EC in relation to that outbreak.

Following an outbreak of that disease in a backyard flock in Germany the Commission has adopted Decision 2007/483/EC. These measures have then been confirmed by Decision 2007/496/EC thereby also modifying the borders of Area A and the duration of the measures in the Czech Republic.
On 12 July 2007 the Czech Republic has reported the confirmation of two further outbreaks in poultry holdings located within the established area A which requires the prolongation of the protection measures. Decision 2006/415/EC should therefore be amended accordingly.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

16. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on a financial contribution from the Community towards emergency measures to combat swine vesicular disease in Italy in 2006 and 2007. (Doc. SANCO/02026/2007-Rev.2)

Payment of Community financial support towards emergency measures to combat Swine vesicular disease is subject to the rules laid down in Commission Regulation (EC) No 349/2005 laying down rules on the Community financing of emergency measures and of the campaign to combat certain animal diseases under Council Decision 90/424/EEC. Outbreaks of Swine vesicular disease occurred in Italy in 2006 and 2007. Italy submitted a final rough estimate of the costs incurred in taking measures to eradicate the disease. The Italian authorities have fully complied with their technical and administrative obligations as set out in Article 3 of Decision 90/424/EEC and Article 6 of Regulation (EC) No 349/2005, therefore, Italy may obtain a financial contribution from the Community towards the costs incurred in taking emergency measures to combat Swine vesicular disease in 2006 and 2007.

Vote: unanimous in favour.

17. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annexes VII, X and XI to Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the requirements for the processing of milk and milk products defined as Category 3 material. (Technical vote for SPS notification) (Doc. SANCO/10326/2005-Rev.15)

This draft proposal has been presented and discussed during the meeting of this Committee on 5 and 6 July 2007 (agenda item 37). This new version of the proposal takes into account the comments made by the Member States. The Commission presented this proposal for a technical agreement with the intention to present it for an opinion in a future meeting of this Committee.

Technical agreement: in favour, Poland represented by Austria, Finland by Sweden, Portugal by Slovakia and Romania by Slovenia.


Regulation (EC) No 318/2007 lays down the animal health requirements relating to the import of birds other than poultry (captive birds) and the quarantine provisions applicable to such imports after importation. The Regulation sets out a list of quarantine facilities and centres approved by the competent authorities of the Member States for import of certain birds other than poultry. The Czech
Republic, Denmark, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom have reviewed their approved quarantine facilities and centres. Therefore, the list of approved quarantine facilities and centres should be amended accordingly.

Furthermore, the provisions in the Regulation stipulate that in case avian influenza or Newcastle disease is suspected in a quarantine facility or in a unit of quarantine centre all birds should be killed and destroyed before even the suspicion is confirmed by laboratory testing. However such a regime could lead to the unnecessary culling of birds that are actually not infected with either disease. Therefore, it is considered more appropriate to wait until the suspicion is confirmed to rule out any other cause of disease symptoms.


The draft Decisions in points 19, 20 and 21 of the agenda were discussed simultaneously. They relate to the importation of cooked poultry meat from China into the EU. Commission Decision 2002/994/EC concern certain protective measures with regard to the products of animal origin intended for human consumption or for animal feed and imported from China. According to that Decision, the Member States may authorise imports of such products if they are accompanied by a declaration of the Chinese competent authority stating that each consignment has been subjected before dispatch to a chemical test in order to ensure that the products concerned do not present a danger to human health. The Chinese authorities have provided the appropriate residue monitoring plan for poultry intended for export to the Community and the Commission has approved it by Commission Decision 2004/432/EC. The results of the most recent Commission on-the-spot inspection visit regarding residues have been favourable. The residue safeguard Decision 2002/994/EC was therefore proposed to be amended to add poultry meat products in the list of products of animal origin that could be imported from China into the EU.


The purpose of this proposal is to prolong Decision 2005/692/EC, which applies until 31 December 2007, until 31 December 2008. Furthermore, it is the intention to authorise the Province of Shandong in China for the importation of poultry meat products heat treated to a minimum temperature of 70 °C into the EU (see point 21 on the agenda - document SANCO/10174/2007). It is therefore appropriate to amend Decision 2005/692/EC accordingly, and to allow the importation of heat treated poultry meat products from the Province of Shandong. Decision 2005/692/EC is therefore proposed to be amended accordingly.


Commission Decision 2007/777/EC lays down the animal and public health rules on imports into the Community of consignments of certain meat products for human consumption,
including the lists of third countries and parts of third countries from which imports of such products are to be authorized.
Under that Decision, China is only authorized to export to the Community heat treated poultry meat products, heat treated in a hermetically sealed container to an Fo value of three or more. The Chinese authorities have asked the Commission to authorize the importation of poultry meat products which have been subjected to a heat treatment with a minimum temperature of 70 °C into the Community. Several inspection missions carried out by the Commission's services in China in the Province of Shandong have shown that the competent authority in China in particular in the Shandong Province is sufficiently well structured regarding the animal health status concerning poultry and they comply with the specific animal health requirements laid down in the Community legislation.
It was therefore proposed that the Province of Shandong in China is authorized for the importation of poultry meat products heat treated to a minimum temperature of 70 °C into the EU. Decision 2007/777/EC was therefore proposed to be amended accordingly.
The Commission informed the Member States that the 3 draft Decisions under discussion today (agenda items 19,20 and 21), that would make it possible for China to export heat treated poultry meat products from Shandong to the EU, will only be adopted by the Commission after that the virus isolates are received by the CRL. The Chinese National Reference Laboratory is at the moment in contact with the CRL on this issue. The Commission will keep the Member States informed of developments.
Member States were invited to send any comments by email.

**Miscellaneous / Divers**

- The **Swedish** representative informed the Member States on the first case of porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) detected in the South of Sweden on 6 July. Following further investigations, in total 5 herds have been confirmed seropositive. Measures were taken aiming at eradicating the disease. The source of infection remains unknown. The letter sent by the Swedish authorities to the Commission and to the World organisation for animal health (OIE) which includes all the information was distributed during the meeting.

- The **Italian** representative briefly informed the Committee on a low pathogenic avian influenza outbreak of H7N3 subtype in Veneto, Italy. The holding contains 2,139 ornamental birds. The outbreak was discovered during the routine monitoring. No clinical signs were reported.

- Due to reported uncertainties in relation to the approval of electronic identifiers for sheep and goats the Commission clarified that Regulation (EC) No 21/2004 and decision 2006/968/EC refer to HDX and FDX-B technology. Both technologies are equally eligible under Community legislation.

- The following documents were distributed during the meeting:
  - "Summary report on horse deaths associated with equine encephalosis virus on the Cape Peninsula of South Africa in 2007"
  - document SANCO/10203/2007 "Information received from Norway in accordance with Article 109 of the EEA Agreement 2006 annual report from Norway regarding animal diseases (Directive 64/432/EEC and Decision 2003/886/EC)".