

Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan 2006 Draft Consultation Version- July 2006

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Covering Foot & Mouth Disease, Avian Influenza, Newcastle Disease, Classical Swine Fever, African Swine Fever & Swine Vesicular Disease

Volume 3- Avian Influenza & Newcastle Disease

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Note: See Volume 1: Generic Annex K for **Glossary**

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SECTION 1. Background

Avian Influenza (Highly Pathogenic)

1.1. AI is a highly infectious viral disease that can probably affect all species of birds. The severity of disease depends upon the strain and subtype of virus and the type of bird infected.

1.2. Highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) viruses have the potential to cause severe disease in poultry, associated with a high death rate (up to 100%); the course of such disease can be so rapid the birds may die without showing signs of disease.

1.3. Infection with low pathogenic AI (LPAI) viruses usually results in milder, less significant disease. However, some LPAI viruses can mutate into highly pathogenic strains and severe disease may be seen with concurrent infection or immunocompromised birds.

1.4. It is possible for some species of birds such as wildfowl to be infected with avian flu viruses and show only mild or inapparent signs of disease acting as a potential source of infection to other birds. Migratory wildfowl are considered as one of a number of risk factors for the spread of disease.

1.5. EU legislation to control and eradicate AI applies to HPAI viruses and LPAI viruses of subtypes H5 and H7. Flocks found to be infected with LPAI would be assessed. It is likely that such flocks would be slaughtered.

1.6. Controls would apply to domestic fowls, turkeys, geese, ducks, guinea fowls, quails, pigeons (reared for meat), ratites (e.g. ostriches), pheasants and partridges and any other poultry reared or kept in captivity for breeding, the production of meat or eggs for consumption or eggs for restocking supplies of game.

1.7. It is thought to be possible that AI can be introduced to domestic poultry through contact with infective migrating wild birds, particularly wild fowl. Contact may be direct through mingling or indirect through contamination of feed, water, utensils or clothing, particularly with faeces. There is also a risk of introduction from the illegal import of live birds.

1.8. Good biosecurity is required to reduce the risk of onward spread.

Public Health Implications

Avian Influenza (Highly Pathogenic)

1.9. Transmission of avian influenza viruses to people remains relatively rare and in most cases occurs as a result of close direct contact with infected poultry or other birds or their faeces. Faecal material can contaminate dust, soil, water, feed, equipment and clothing and feathers. Transmission to people only occurs with certain strains of avian influenza.

Information about the current outbreaks of avian flu is available on the World Health Organisation website at:

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/chronology/en

1.10. Symptoms of avian flu in people range from mild conjunctivitis to typical flu-like illness which can lead to acute respiratory illness, viral pneumonia and can be fatal. Infection with avian influenza virus A/H5N1 has been characterised by sudden onset with cough and fever and high fever. There is currently no vaccine for the treatment of avian flu in people, though one is being developed. There is evidence that avian flu viruses respond to antiviral drugs and in the UK oseltamivir ('Tamiflu') or other appropriate antiviral agent would be used for the treatment and prevention of avian flu in people.

1.11. Avian influenza has two significant implications for human health:

- the severity of illness that may follow infection with avian flu virus
- the potential for adaptation of avian influenza virus A/H5N1 into a strain, that both causes severe disease in humans and spreads easily from person to person, or its transformation, through exchange of genes with a human flu virus, into a completely novel virus capable of spreading easily between people and causing severe illness on a pandemic scale.

1.12. Experts fear that the continued spread of A/H5N1 increases the opportunity for people to become infected concurrently with human and avian flu viruses. If this happens, the person could act as a 'mixing vessel', enabling genetic re-assortment of the virus to occur and a novel influenza virus strain to emerge.

1.13. For further information: The Chief Medical Officer has published a guide: 'Explaining Pandemic Flu' and a Contingency Plan for Pandemic Flu and these are available on the Department of Health website:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/>

1.14. Public health control measures in any outbreak of avian influenza amongst poultry will therefore aim to protect people against avian influenza

and also protect against the risk of genetic reassortment of the virus. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has advised that routine vaccination of poultry workers and veterinarians with seasonal human flu vaccine is not recommended, but should be used in a confirmed outbreak of avian flu as a protection against the possibility of re-assortment with human flu virus.

1.15. Antiviral therapy, as appropriate, to protect against the development of avian flu will be given to those who may be exposed to the infection through close contact with infected birds.

SECTION 2. Legislation

2.1. Much of the disease control strategy is based on European legislation implemented in our domestic laws. Council Directive 2005/94/EC covers the control of avian influenza of the subtypes H5 and H7 in poultry and other captive birds and replaced Directive 92/40/EEC.

2.2 The Commission has also introduced various Decisions to supplement the provisions of the Directive. These are being regularly reviewed and replaced.

2.3 This Section describes the domestic legislation made or to be made for the control of avian influenza.

Animal Health Act 1981

2.4 The Animal Health Act 1981 provides powers for the control of outbreaks of AI and ND. It was amended in 2002 to provide more powers to deal with foot and mouth disease and these powers were extended by the Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England & Wales) Order in 2003 so that they are now exercisable in relation to AI and ND. The Act, as amended, provides for

- slaughter of diseased poultry, poultry suspected of disease, poultry exposed to disease and poultry which the Secretary of State thinks should be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease.
- payment of compensation for birds that are slaughtered but are not diseased.
- publication of a slaughter protocol prior to exercising the power to impose a preventive or firebreak cull. Emergency vaccination would have to be considered prior to any cull, and, if not used, the reasons would have to be published.
- veterinary inspectors to have powers to enter premises to ascertain whether disease anti-bodies exist, whether any animal is or was infected with disease and whether any causative agent of disease is present
- publication of biosecurity guidance
- preparation and review of a national contingency plan

Legislation Transposing the Directive

2.5 *The Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) (No 2) Order 2006 (the AI Order)*, made under the Animal Health Act 1981, implements the bulk of Council Directive 2005/94/EEC for the control of avian influenza in poultry and other captive birds (the vaccination

requirements are implemented separately). The measures in the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 are revoked insofar as they relate to avian influenza.

The AI Order includes provisions for the following:

- Notification of suspicion of AI in poultry and other captive birds.
- Power to impose measures to control both highly pathogenic and low pathogenic avian influenza in poultry and other captive birds.
- Power to impose movement restrictions on a suspect premises.
- power to declare a temporary control zone around the suspect premises . A temporary movement restriction zone can also be imposed covering the whole or part of England.
- Entry to premises for the purposes of veterinary inquiry.
- Where highly pathogenic avian influenza is confirmed, the power to declare a Protection Zone (minimum 3km) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10km) around the infected premises. A Restricted Zone can also be declared covering part or the whole of England.
- Where low pathogenic avian influenza is confirmed, the power to declare a low pathogenic Restricted Zone around the infected premises (minimum 1 km).
- Ability to derogate from some control measures subject to risk assessment.
- Measures to reduce and control the spread of virus in mammals including pigs.
- C & D of buildings used to house poultry and other captive birds, their surroundings, the vehicles used for transport and all equipment likely to be contaminated.
- Surveillance for avian influenza.

2.6 *The Avian Influenza (Vaccination) (England) Regulations 2006* implement the vaccination requirements of Council Directive 2005/94/EEC. The Directive prohibits vaccination of birds against avian influenza unless with Defra's consent. Such consent for emergency vaccination can be given without Commission approval if a risk assessment indicates that there is a significant threat of avian influenza spreading within or into the country due to an outbreak in another nearby country and certain movement conditions are put in place. The Directive also permits Defra to give consent for preventive vaccination based on a risk assessment but only subject to Commission approval of a preventive vaccination plan. Current vaccination policy in England is described at paragraph [3.26] below.

The Commission Decisions

2.7 *Preventive Measures Decision* (2005/734 (as amended)) and *Preventive Measures (Zoos) Decision* (2005/744). [Replacement instruments expected]

The power to impose preventive measures subject to a risk assessment (including housing of birds and a ban on bird gatherings subject to a licensing regime) are now included in the AI Order.

Decision 2005/744 allows member states to vaccinate birds kept in zoos. The Commission has agreed the UK's vaccination plan and this will be implemented by a revision of the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (no 2) Regulations 2005. A decision on whether to allow such vaccination of zoo birds to go ahead will be made based on a risk assessment.

2.8 *H5N1 in Poultry Decision* (replacement of Decision 2006/135 agreed on 4 May 2006)

This Decision supplements the Directive in an outbreak of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza in poultry and will be transposed by the Avian Influenza (H5N1 in Poultry) (England) Regulations 2006 . This will provide for:

- additional restrictions in control zones (in the Decision called Area A and Area B) around a premises where there is a suspect or confirmed case of H5N1 in poultry. These apply to poultry and day old chicks, other captive birds, hatching eggs, wild game products and poultry by products but derogations are allowed.
- that Area A on suspicion will be the same as the temporary control zone declared under the AI Order and be a minimum of 10 km. Area B will be the same as all or part of the temporary movement restriction zone declared under the AI Order.
- that Area A on confirmation will be the same as the protection and surveillance zones declared under the AI Order. Area B will be the same as all or part of the restricted zone declared under the AI Order.
- a ban on bird gatherings in Area B;

2.9 *H5N1 in Wild Birds Decision* (replacement of Decision 2006/115 agreed on 16 June 2006)

This Decision provides for controls if the H5N1 strain of avian influenza is found in wild birds. It will be implemented by the Avian Influenza (H5N1 in Wild Birds) (England) Order 2006. This will provide for:

- Declaration of a control area with minimum 3 km radius within a monitoring area of minimum 10 km radius around the place where the infected wild bird was found;

- Derogations on the declaration of areas, the size and duration of the areas based on a risk assessment;
- Veterinary inspection of all commercial poultry premises in the control area. Targeted risk based visits to non commercial poultry and other captive bird holdings;
- Increased biosecurity, wild bird surveillance and publicity campaigns in the control area;
- Movements from both areas of poultry, day old chicks and other captive birds prohibited but derogations allowed for movements of poultry and day old chicks.
- Prohibition on movements from the control area for the following (but derogations allowed):
 - hatching eggs;
 - meat and meat products from poultry and wild feathered game;
 - by products from poultry, wild feathered game and other captive birds;
 - unprocessed manure.
- A ban in both areas on the hunting of wild birds, the release of game birds and bird gatherings.

2.10 The table below indicates the local veterinary action to be taken in relation to the level of suspicion.

SUMMARY OF INITIAL ACTION ON SUSPECT CASES

Level	AI
0	All restrictions on premises lifted no further action.
1	Suspect birds left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
2	Sick birds may be killed. Suspect flock left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
3	All poultry on the premises are pre-emptively slaughtered. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed. Area restrictions imposed. Contact Public Health Partners

4	<u>Would not apply</u>
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SECTION 3. Disease Control Strategy

3.1. The disease control strategy adopted will be consistent with the UK's EU obligations and the Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) Order 2006. The Government's objective in tackling AI will be to eradicate the disease and to restore the UK's disease-free status as quickly as possible. In doing so, Government will seek to select control strategies which:

- ensure maximum protection of human safety – particularly worker safety;
- establish and maintain preventive measures and surveillance and monitoring arrangements which minimise the risk of introduction of disease into domestic birds;
- provide due protection for animal welfare; and
- minimise any impact on the rural economy, international trade and the sustainability of the industry, and at all times provide a proportionate evidence-based response which is readily achievable by delivery partners and stakeholders.

The Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) Order 2006 came into force on 27 April and implements the requirements of Council Directive 2005/94/EC on the control of avian influenza. It replaces the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 (insofar as that order dealt with Avian Influenza).

In addition to the minimum requirements under the legislation there are a range of further measures which may be adopted depending on a veterinary assessment of the risk posed by avian influenza. These include:

- **Housing:** Bird keepers may be asked to house their birds or otherwise separate them from wild birds on a national, regional, or area basis. Any decision to issue such an instruction will be carefully considered in the light of the exit strategy, impact on the free range status of, and the welfare implications.
- **Gatherings.** Currently gatherings (including pigeon racing) are permitted under a General License provided basic biosecurity measures are met. A complete ban or further restrictions could be imposed.
- **Vaccination of zoo birds.** In order to protect the genetic and biodiversity value of zoo birds we currently have in place a vaccine bank and plans in place with zoos for distribution and use.

Vaccination

Vaccination against avian influenza is regulated by the Avian Influenza (Vaccination) (England) Regulations 2006. General Vaccination is not expected to be part of the current GB AI control strategy.

AVIAN INFLUENZA IN PIGS

If Avian Influenza is confirmed in wild birds near to a pig unit, a risk assessment will be carried out, to provide the basis for advice and instruction given by the SVS to keepers of outdoor pigs in the area. It is not proposed that there will be a requirement to house pigs.

If HPAI were identified in pigs during ongoing surveillance the unit would be placed under movement restrictions.

Further Action

- 3.2. Once AI is confirmed, the main elements of this plan are brought into action. In particular:
- Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 outlines emergency preparedness & mobilisation
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 4 describes outbreak management
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 5 sets out the main elements of the Communications Plan;
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 6 describes the strategic, tactical and operational organisations and structures.

These last two sections are augmented by the SVS instructions and the local office contingency plans.

SECTION 4. Outbreak Management – AI

Health and Safety and Staff Welfare

4.1. Everyone in contact with diseased birds must follow the precautions detailed in the relevant risk assessment. Because of the possible different strains and varying infectivity of each strain of avian influenza virus to people, a precautionary approach should be taken. Anyone with medical conditions that may increase the risk of infection with avian influenza, such as respiratory disease or a reduced immuno-competence will be advised to stay away from poultry farms, avoid all contact with infected birds and seek appropriate medical advice.

4.2. All who have had, or are likely to have contact with infected birds will need to be provided with information as to how to protect themselves and their families from infection.

4.3. To protect against infection, a hierarchy of control measures are needed which include:

- Managing the potential exposure of staff by keeping work numbers to a minimum
- safe working practice in accordance with the risk assessment.
- safe working practice in accordance with the risk assessment
- the wearing of all appropriate personal protective equipment by poultry workers/handlers/cullers/veterinarians;
- safe disposal of used personal protective clothing and equipment
- use of the antiviral oseltamivir ('Tamiflu') or other appropriate antiviral agent for the prescribed period by all who are considered to be at risk of infection and for whom antiviral therapy is not contraindicated
- vaccination with seasonal flu vaccine of all those considered to be at risk of infection and for whom vaccine is not contraindicated
- monitoring of health status of persons exposed to infected birds
- guidance to those at risk of infection on the personal hygiene measures to be taken to protect their health and to prevent the spread of infection.

4.4. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has advised that in the event of an outbreak of HPAI in poultry, those exposed to infection should be offered seasonal flu vaccine as a precaution against the possibility of co-infection with human flu. Vaccine should be given as soon as possible, either before or at time of exposure, and at least within 48 hours of initial exposure.

4.5. Antiviral therapy should be given as soon as possible, either before or at the time of exposure, and at least within 48 hours of initial exposure.

4.6. Information and guidance for anyone working with poultry that may be affected with avian influenza, may be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/HSforal.pdf>

4.7. Persons not employed by Defra should also seek health and safety guidance from their employer's Health and Safety adviser or medical practitioner. Advice is also available from the Health and Safety Executive on their website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

Notification of Disease

4.8. Where a suspect (level 2 or 3) or confirmed case of avian influenza in birds is notified to the DVM, **the DVM shall notify:**

- the Health Protection Agency's duty officer at the Centre for Emergency Response, Porton Down on 01980 612100 (24 hour telephone response).
- the local Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) and Director of Public Health within the Primary Care Trust.
- Defra's Departmental Health and Safety Manager; this will enable him/her to mobilise the occupational health provider.

4.9. Upon receipt of a notification of suspected or confirmed avian influenza in birds, the role of the Health Protection Agency is to support Defra and the State Veterinary Service in the investigation and control of the incident in relation to the protection of human health. This support will include the surveillance of influenza diseases in the populations at risk associated with the outbreak, provision of advice and guidance on public health control measures, medical interventions and health advice to the public. Specifically the HPA will:

- Notify the local Health Protection Unit in the area within which the disease is occurring
- Notify the Department of Health
- Liaise with the local Director of Public Health in the area where the disease is occurring as to the steps needed for the protection of human health and communication with the public
- Locally, through the Health Protection Unit and in consultation with the local Director of Public Health and NHS colleagues and Defra's occupational health services, coordinate the investigation of human health implications of confirmed disease in birds and the provision of all necessary medical interventions, such as the administration of antiviral drugs and 'flu vaccine, to those at risk of avian influenza

infection including to those at risk of infection as a result of occupational exposure.

- Locally through the Health Protection Unit and in consultation with the local Director of Public Health and DVM, ensure that a joint Incident Control Team is convened as appropriate

4.10. Following notification of a suspect/ confirmed case, the Department's occupational health provider will work with Defra/ State Veterinary Service in ensuring that appropriate occupational health protocols and records are maintained. The occupational health provider will liaise with the HPA on behalf of Defra to ensure that the public health and occupational health arrangements are compatible and that any actions necessary are implemented as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Biosecurity Guidance

4.11. Anyone coming into contact with poultry or their manure/litter runs the risk of spreading animal diseases. Biosecurity is the prevention of disease causing agents entering or leaving a livestock premises. It involves a number of measures and protocols designed to prevent potential disease causing agents being spread from one premises to another.

4.12. Guidance has been produced for all those who go onto farms. It applies to everyone who enters a farm or premises with farm animals or enters land used for grazing or keeping farm animals. It applies to all animal diseases covered and includes poultry. It deals with the precautions to be taken when entering or leaving any premises with farm animals in the absence of an outbreak of animal disease, after confirmation of an outbreak of an animal disease, and to premises under specific animal disease restrictions. All personnel implementing this contingency plan in the field must follow this guidance. It is at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/biosecurity_guidance.pdf

4.13. Poultry owners, (particularly those with backyard flocks), game and wild bird keepers should keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents and other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores. Owners are encouraged to have an active rodent and pest control system in place, and should be vigilant for evidence of vermin and monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping.

4.14. Further advice for poultry keepers is at Volume 3: AI, Annex B and may be found on the Defra website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/poultrybiosec.pdf>

4.15. This advice, and the health and safety guidance set out in this Plan is kept under review. It will be reissued and brought to all poultry keepers'

attention in the event of an outbreak of AI or ND. Defra ADC Division will provide access to use existing poultry sector databases to mail the guidance and Press Releases. Any networks that have been developed by Defra EDPC division with respect to Farm Health Planning Initiatives (under the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy) will be used as an additional communication channel with industry, veterinary bodies and other bodies to alert poultry keepers to available best practice advice.

Animal Welfare

General Welfare Responsibilities

4.16. For all involved with the keeping of poultry there is a responsibility to anticipate problems and to take steps to mitigate the effects. Guidance will be issued by Defra to poultry keepers in advance of, or in the early stages of, movement restrictions being put in place. If welfare problems arise which cannot be alleviated by management or husbandry practices, poultry keepers will be given the opportunity to move their birds under licence. Such movements may include movement to slaughter for the food chain or to more suitable land or buildings. For example broilers and spent hens in infected areas may be permitted to move to slaughter.

4.17. In order to reduce the risk of exposure it may be necessary to house poultry or otherwise keep them separate from wild birds. Free-range producers should ensure that adequate contingency arrangements are in place for providing for the welfare of free-range birds when they need to be kept housed.

4.18. The following poultry enterprises may be at greatest risk of welfare problems if disease control measures are introduced:

(i) Point of lay birds will need to be moved from rearer to laying accommodation. If laying accommodation can be found within the same movement restriction zone then welfare issues will not arise. However if there is no laying accommodation available within the zone, and movement of birds cannot be licenced to any other suitable premises these birds may present a welfare issue.

(ii) Broilers, hens and other poultry in Protection and Surveillance zones and under restrictions may also need to enter a welfare disposal scheme if they cannot be moved to slaughter houses and instigation of on farm contingency plans do not adequately prevent welfare problems from developing.

4.19. Hatcheries produce day old chicks, which are then delivered to rearing units. Current legislation allows the hatcheries to deliver day old chicks to rearing units only if they are located in the same infected area. However it is not felt that a welfare disposal scheme would be required for this category of bird because hatcheries on the whole will be aware that there is no capacity

on rearing farms and can destroy the chicks and embryos humanely at the hatchery.

4.20. If it is considered appropriate and to prevent welfare standards from deteriorating a Livestock Welfare Disposal Scheme may be introduced. Following a declaration by a private veterinary surgeon that the birds in question are suffering (or will suffer in the near future) welfare problems, which are directly attributable to the movement restrictions. Defra will arrange the killing and disposal of birds. The killing may take place on farms.

4.21. There would be no payment made to producers for birds slaughtered under such a Livestock Welfare Disposal Scheme. This is in line with current Government policy.

4.22. The Head of Livestock Strategy Division, in consultation with the Heads of Animal Welfare Division, Animal Welfare Veterinary Division and Exotic Disease Prevention and Control Division will draw up a contingency plan for such measures and will consult stakeholders on it.

Detection of Notifiable Disease in Avian Quarantine

Authorised Under Commission Decision 2000/666

Quarantine is designed to contain disease so a quarantine incident does not constitute a disease outbreak unless and until there is evidence that disease has escaped.

Clinical or laboratory evidence of disease will be reported to Defra. The [CVO or DCVO] will be alerted and an urgent telephone conference will then be convened as soon as sufficient facts have been established.

On receipt of a positive or strongly suspicious laboratory result or clinical report, the [CVO or DCVO] will convene an urgent meeting of the NEEG to interpret the initial veterinary inquiry findings for ADPG. ADPG will then decide what action is appropriate with the devolved CVO taking a lead role if applicable. The SVS routinely collates key information on quarantine in order to support this process.

Strategic level decisions should not be required. Operational level decisions will be made by the local DVM. The AHDO should be able to provide sufficient resources to deal with a single incident.

Communications will follow the 'amber' model in the generic contingency plan as appropriate to the nature of the incident.

Public health risks will be managed in accordance with guidance provided in section 1.

Further detail is provided in Viper Chapter 21C.

Operational Procedures

Vaccination

4.23. There is provision in the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 for the imposition of a compulsory vaccination zone. However, in view of the limitations, vaccination is not expected to be part of the current GB AI control strategy.

Initial Investigation

4.24. For details on operational procedures to be followed at the initial investigation stage refer to Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3.

Valuation

4.25. Where appropriate poultry will be valued according to standard rate cards. This system is used for valuing poultry flocks being culled for salmonella control and the range of species and husbandry types for which cards are available has been extended in consultation with the industry. In addition specialist poultry valuers may be required for valuation of species not covered by the cards and for resolving disputes.

Compensation

4.26. Compensation is payable at 100% of the market value for birds that are not affected with disease at the time of slaughter. Compensation is not payable for diseased or dead birds. Consideration is being given (without commitment) to the situation where birds die between the time of report/suspicion and confirmation of disease. The number of birds not diseased is recorded at the initial veterinary inquiry. However, this is an incentive to report suspicion of disease at the earliest opportunity and to allow slaughter to be undertaken as rapidly as possible. To calculate the amount of compensation, birds are counted or accurately estimated and valued.

Slaughter

4.27. In the event of AI being identified the slaughter of poultry would be considered as a control measure in order to eliminate disease. The department will deploy a range of slaughter techniques including necking, gassing and electrocution, depending on the numbers, species and location of the birds. Contingency contracts are in place with poultry catchers and killers. See Volume 3: AI, Section 4 and Annex A for details on Disease Control Strategy and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol.

Disposal

4.28. In an outbreak of AI the disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration or rendering would be implemented immediately. See Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 for current disposal options.

Cleansing and Disinfection of affected premises

4.29. Preliminary cleansing and disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of Defra and will be undertaken and funded by Defra. Secondary disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of the owner.

Surveillance

The Protection Zone

4.30. On all poultry premises within the Protection Zone there will be regular clinical inspection and examination to look for evidence of AI. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area, samples will be collected from poultry on all premises in the protection zone and submitted for laboratory examination.

The Surveillance Zone

4.31. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area a statistically significant number of poultry premises will be inspected for signs of disease and samples collected for submission to laboratories. Premises with waterfowl will be subject to targeted surveillance because clinical disease is not always apparent in infected waterfowl.

Wild Bird Population

4.32. If there is epidemiological evidence to suggest that wild birds may have a role in the local spread of the disease, this will be investigated further where practical. The investigation may involve collection of dead wild birds for laboratory investigation.

Lifting of restrictions on the premises

IP/DC

4.33. When the cleansing and disinfection of infected premises has been completed satisfactorily, the premises will remain under restriction for at least 21 days. After this, sentinel poultry can be introduced to the premises, under licence. Sentinel poultry are healthy birds that are susceptible to AI infection. The purpose of introducing sentinel birds is to detect the presence of any remaining AI virus. It is assumed that if virus remains, birds will become infected and display signs of disease.

4.34. The health of the sentinel poultry will be monitored over the next 21 days to detect signs of disease. The restrictions on the premises will be lifted if the sentinel poultry remain free from disease caused by AI over the next 21-day period. If the owner decides not to use sentinel poultry, the premises will remain under restrictions for 56 days from the date that cleansing and disinfection had been completed to the satisfaction of a veterinary inspector.

Area/Zones

4.35. PZ controls will apply for at least 21 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of all infected premises, after which time the PZ becomes part of the SZ. The SZ will remain in place until a minimum period of 30 days has passed from the completion of the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the last IP.

4.36. The infected area will be lifted after all surveillance visits and laboratory tests have been reported as negative, indicating that no AI virus remains.

Serology – Surveillance

4.37. Serological surveillance may be carried out for a number of reasons, including epidemiology and declaring surveillance and protection zones to be free from disease. Serological surveillance in support of lifting restrictions should not commence until at least 21 days following preliminary cleansing and disinfection of an infected premises.

Diagnostic Testing

4.38. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency at Weybridge provides the diagnostic testing service for AI.

4.39. Personnel required to undertake blood sampling will be recruited and trained under the co-ordination of the Human Resources Services Division. Personnel could be drawn from veterinary/agricultural students and from local Job Centres.

Expert Group

4.40. A permanently operational expert group comprising of epidemiologists, veterinary scientists and virologists, has been established to maintain an expertise in order to assist the competent authority in ensuring preparedness against an outbreak of AI.

4.41. In the event of an outbreak of avian influenza, the AI Expert Group will be convened and its membership expanded to cover diseases of poultry and will be chaired by the CVO/DCVO.

4.42. The expert group will be a strategic/tactical level group of specialists, whose role will be to provide advice to senior management on surveillance

programmes, analyse information and advise on control strategies. They will report to the CVO and the NDCC.

National Emergencies Epidemiology Group (NEEG)

4.43. Sufficient training has been undertaken to provide enough trained personnel to provide epidemiology groups in the event of an outbreak of AI. The intention is to have at least two veterinarians trained in epidemiology in each Region.

4.44. In the event of an outbreak, the group(s) will be alerted by the NDCC and mobilised in the field as soon as the disease is confirmed. The primary task of the team is to provide the National and Local Disease Control Centres with a report, which meets with relevant Commission guidelines. The team will also advise on sanitation and carcase disposal

AVIAN INFLUENZA ANNEXES

Avian Influenza Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol – AI ANNEX A

1. The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 1734) came into force on 11 July 2003. It extends to AI and ND certain measures introduced by the Animal Health Act 2002, including the power to slaughter animals to prevent the spread of disease (a preventive or firebreak cull). The use of this power is circumscribed by legislation. In particular there is a need to have a disease control (slaughter) protocol and this requirement was introduced by The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (Biosecurity Guidance and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol) (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 2035). The power cannot be used unless the protocol has been published and vaccination has first been considered to prevent the spread of disease (Section 32C1 and D(2) of the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended). The purpose of this disease control (slaughter) protocol is to identify criteria to be considered and procedures to be followed should it be considered necessary to call on this new slaughter power.

2. The definition of 'poultry' in the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended has been extended to include all birds (Article 3 of the Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) Order 2006).

Purpose for which the power would be used

3. This power would be used only where this is justified by the circumstances of the possibility of disease spreading and on the basis of sound veterinary, epidemiological and scientific advice.

The principal factors to be taken into account

4. A major factor will be to get ahead of the disease. A particular example would be to protect areas of dense poultry population. The slaughter would include those flocks (and, if necessary, other birds) which, should they become infected, would present a significant risk to the farming and poultry community more generally by contributing to onward spread. It is in such circumstances that effective preventative action may be necessary to safeguard the wider public interest. Species, geographical area and, if appropriate, type of farming would be relevant. Any decision to use the wider powers of slaughter would be taken in the light of an overall assessment of the risks, costs and benefits in a given situation. This could include not only risks of transmission but also the potential social and economic costs that would arise if effective and timely action were not taken.

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The procedure to be followed in reaching a decision

5. The steps to be taken comprise of:
 - (a) the identification of the poultry that are likely to contribute to spread of disease, based on epidemiological assessment, veterinary advice and local factors;
 - (b) the determination of which species are involved;
 - (c) consideration of exemptions on the basis of husbandry or other criteria, for example, rare breeds or genetic value;
 - (d) consideration of exemptions for hatcheries;
 - (e) the determination of the geographical area involved;
 - (f) the determination of the rules for inclusion or exclusion of poultry at the boundary of that area;
 - (g) analysis of risks, costs and benefits;
 - (h) the publication of an outline of the reasons why such a slaughter is needed.

The procedure by which poultry on a premises will be deemed to be included in a slaughter

6. Premises believed to contain poultry to be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease would be identified. A Veterinary Inspector would visit and ascertain if poultry meet the criteria for inclusion in the preventive cull.
7. The Veterinary Inspector would be required to explain the reasons to the owner and give him an opportunity to provide evidence if he believed the poultry should be exempted. A slaughter notice would be issued that states the powers under which slaughter is required and the reason why the owner's stock is included (with reference to the criteria for slaughter to prevent the spread of disease).

The means by which a particular decision to slaughter can be reviewed

8. Both as part of the slaughter notice and during explanations the owner must be made aware that they can ask the DVM to review the decision that their stock meets the criteria for the preventive slaughter and be advised how and by when this can be done.
9. The DVM, or deputy, must be available to hear such reviews. The following action would be taken:

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- they will consider the views of the owner as to why they believe the decision is wrong.
- they must ensure that the veterinary inspector has carried out a full and fair inquiry to establish if the poultry meet the appropriate criteria for inclusion in the cull.

Biosecurity Poultry Guidance – AI ANNEX B

Better Biosecurity Provides:

Peace of Mind, A Healthier Flock and a More Viable Business

All poultry keepers need to be aware of the need for strict biosecurity and hygiene on their premises:

Benefits:

- **HELPS KEEP OUT** exotic diseases such as Newcastle disease and avian influenza
- **REDUCES THE RISK** of zoonotic diseases such as salmonella becoming established
- **LIMITS SPREAD** of diseases and **HELPS TO PROTECT** your neighbours, public health and the countryside
- **IMPROVES** overall flock health
- **CUTS COSTS** of disease treatment
- **REDUCES LOSSES** and could improve farm profitability

How Disease Spreads:

- **Movement** of poultry, people, vehicles and equipment between and within farms
- **Introduction** of birds of low or unknown health status
- **Contact** with neighbours' flocks
- **Using shared farm equipment and vehicles** which have not been effectively cleansed and disinfected
- **Contact** with vermin and wild birds
- **Birds drinking** from contaminated water sources
- **Birds eating** contaminated feed
- **Unsatisfactory cleaning and disinfection** of vehicles, sheds, feeding troughs and other equipment

Important!

- 1. Make a flock health plan with your vet that includes the basic biosecurity measures in this guidance to reduce the risk disease spreading. Plans should include isolation for new stock and sampling procedures for certain diseases**
- 2. Ensure that all records are accurate and up to date to allow traceability of produce through the food chain**
- 3. Train your staff – ensure they understand that biosecurity and strict hygiene is important**

How to Stop Disease – Keep Your Farm Clean!

- Don't bring infection onto your farm, or spread it around your farm, on your clothes, footwear or hands. Clean overalls and footwear must be worn when entering poultry farms. Protective clothing and footwear should be removed and either cleansed and disinfected, laundered or disposed of after use.
- Strictly limit and control access to poultry flocks. If possible the site should be fenced with a controlled entry point. Visitors and their vehicles should be limited and as far as possible kept away from poultry buildings and pastures
- Have pressure washers, brushes, hoses, water and an approved disinfectant available. Make sure they are used by visitors to clean vehicles, equipment and boots
- Keep farm access routes, parking areas, yards, areas around buildings and storage areas clean and tidy and well maintained. This helps avoid wild birds and animals being attracted onto the site and entering buildings and stores
- Wild birds can carry poultry diseases. Minimise contact between poultry and wild birds. Prevent accumulation of standing water and remove spilled feed that could attract wild birds. Maintain buildings to ensure that wild birds do not nest or roost in them
- Keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents or other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores

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- Have an active rodent and pest control system in place. Be vigilant for evidence of vermin. Monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping
- Supply only clean fresh drinking water to birds. Water lines and drinkers must be flushed through and cleaned regularly. In the case of free-range birds restrict access to possible sources of standing water used by wild birds
- Feed bins, hoppers and feeding equipment must be cleaned and maintained regularly. Feed silos and containers must be sealed to prevent animals and wild birds contaminating feed
- Feed should only be obtained from a mill or supplier that operates in accordance with relevant Defra and UKASTA Codes of Practice who will make available results of salmonella tests on request
- Damaged eggs, dead birds, litter and manure may carry disease. Dispose of them promptly and properly
- Clean and disinfect all vehicles after each journey. If possible, do not use the same vehicles for transporting birds, feed, manure or other wastes
- Regularly clean and disinfect all crates, containers and other equipment before and after use. Do not move any equipment into different poultry buildings without cleaning and disinfecting it first. This also applies to injecting, medicating or treating birds (DH/JW)
- At depopulation at the end of a cycle, thoroughly clean the building and all equipment, including ducting, drains and fans. Remove all surplus feed, dead birds and litter. Disinfect the premises and all equipment and carry out rodent and other pest control. Cleaning equipment and protective clothing should also be cleansed and disinfected

Buying New Stock -

Always know the health status of birds you are buying or moving!

- Incoming stock should be kept properly isolated from the rest of the flock - discuss with your vet and agree a testing and monitoring programme
- Only place new stock in facilities which you know have been cleaned and disinfected
- Use separate equipment and staff or handle isolated stock last. Never re-enter your main flock buildings after dealing with isolated stock until you have washed and changed into cleaned overalls and boots
- Keep isolation buildings as near as possible to the farm entrance and as separate from other poultry buildings. Ensure buildings are in good repair and effectively prevent vermin from getting in and spreading any diseases

Be Vigilant!

- **Look out for signs of disease in your flock**
- **Increased mortality, falling egg production and signs of respiratory problems may be early indicators of a disease problem**
- **If you suspect disease, ask your vet for advice as soon as possible. Do not wait for more evidence - some diseases can spread very quickly!**

NEWCASTLE DISEASE

SECTION 1. Background

Newcastle Disease

1.1. ND is a highly infectious disease affecting poultry and other birds. Disease is caused by infection with virulent strains of Newcastle disease virus (NDV). There are a variety of strains of NDV, which range in virulence. Low virulence strains may cause sub clinical or mild respiratory disease. Highly virulent strains can cause severe disease which is characterised by high death rates and a range of clinical signs. Control is targeted at strains with a high pathogenicity (ability to cause severe disease).

1.2. The severity of the disease also varies depending upon the species, degree of immunity and age of bird, environmental conditions and general health status of the flock.

1.3. Controls would apply to domestic fowls, turkeys, geese, ducks, guinea fowls, quails, pigeons, ratites (e.g. ostriches), pheasants and partridges and any other poultry reared or kept in captivity for breeding, the production of meat or eggs for consumption or eggs for restocking supplies of game.

1.4. It is possible that ND could be introduced to domestic poultry by contact with infective wild pigeons and other wild birds or indirectly through contamination of feed or objects. NDV can be carried on objects or clothing contaminated with excretions from infective birds, particularly faeces. Such material could be imported on clothing or shoes of people, that had been in contact with infective birds.

1.5. Illegal imports of live birds also pose a risk of introduction but this is difficult to quantify.

1.6. Good biosecurity reduces the risk of onward spread.

1.7. The ND virus has been shown to be infectious to humans and other animals, although severe disease has only been observed in birds. In humans infection occasionally results in mild disease characterised by conjunctivitis. The majority of human cases have occurred in laboratory workers or people handling live vaccines. NDV does not pose a significant risk to public health.

SECTION 2. Legislation

2.1. Much of the disease control strategy is based on European legislation implemented in our domestic laws. This is supported by administrative provisions. This Annex describes these.

Animal Health Act 1981

2.2. The Animal Health Act 1981 provides powers for the control of outbreaks of AI and ND. It was amended in 2002 to provide more powers to deal with foot and mouth disease and these powers were extended by the Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England and Wales) Order in 2003 so that they are now exercisable in relation to AI and ND. The Act, as amended, provides for

- slaughter of diseased poultry, poultry suspected of disease, poultry exposed to disease and poultry which the Secretary of State thinks should be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease.
- payment of compensation for birds that are slaughtered but are not diseased.
- publication of a slaughter protocol prior to exercising the power to impose a preventive or firebreak cull. Emergency vaccination would have to be considered prior to any cull, and, if not used, the reasons would have to be published.
- veterinary inspectors to have powers to enter premises to ascertain whether disease anti-bodies exist, whether any animal is or was infected with disease and whether any causative agent of disease is present
- publication of biosecurity guidance
- preparation and review of a national contingency plan

The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003

2.3. The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003, made under the Animal Health Act 1981, implements Council Directive 92/40/EEC for the control of avian influenza and Council Directive 92/66/EEC for the control of Newcastle disease. Its provisions include the following:

- Notification of suspicion of AI or ND in poultry and other captive birds.
- Imposition of movement controls on suspicion of disease.
- Entry to premises for the purposes of veterinary inquiry.
- Where disease is confirmed, the imposition of a Protection Zone (minimum 3km) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10km) around the infected premises by declaratory order.
- Entry to premises for the purposes of veterinary inquiry.

Defra's Exotic Animal Disease Generic Contingency Plan

- Where disease is confirmed, the imposition of a Protection Zone (minimum 3km) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10km) around the infected premises by declaratory order.
- Cleansing and disinfection of buildings used to house poultry, their surroundings, the vehicles used for transport and all equipment likely to be contaminated;
- Powers to require, by publication of a notice, the vaccination of any species of poultry in any given area and for any given period.

2.4. The Diseases of Poultry Order also extends provisions for investigating premises and imposing movement restrictions to all diseases of birds and all species of birds.

2.5. The table below indicates the local veterinary action to be taken in relation to the level of suspicion.

SUMMARY OF INITIAL ACTION ON SUSPECT CASES

Level	ND
0	All restrictions on premises lifted no further action.
1	Suspect birds left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
2	Sick birds may be killed. Suspect flock left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
3	All poultry on the premises are pre-emptively slaughtered. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed. Area restrictions imposed.
4	<u>Would not apply</u>

SECTION 3. Disease Control Strategy

3.1. The disease control strategy adopted will be consistent with the UK's EU obligations and in line with the appropriate EU legislation. The Government's objective in tackling ND will be to eradicate the disease and to restore the UK's disease-free status as quickly as possible. In doing so, Government will seek to select control strategies which:

- minimise the number of poultry which need to be slaughtered, either to control the disease or on welfare grounds, and which keeps poultry welfare problems to a minimum;
- cause the least possible disruption to the food, farming and tourism industries, to visitors to the countryside, and to rural communities and the wider economy;
- minimise damage to the environment and protecting public health; and
- minimise the burden on taxpayers and the public at large.

Premises Controls

The following measures will be applied on confirmation of Newcastle disease: (Note: The first case will be confirmed by the CVO following laboratory diagnosis)

3.2. Premises where disease has been confirmed are known as infected premises (IPs); birds that have been exposed to infection through contact with the infected premises are known as dangerous contacts (DCs).

- All poultry on IPs will be culled. DCs will be identified. Where the risk of exposure to virus is high, the poultry will be culled and laboratory samples taken. Where the risk of exposure is assessed as not high, restrictions on the premises will be in place for 21 days and regular veterinary visits undertaken.
- Movement restrictions will apply to the IP or high risk DC until all birds have been culled, and a veterinary inspector is satisfied that cleaning and disinfection has been completed.
- Restrictions are applied and lifted by serving the occupier of the premises with notices, which explain the restrictions imposed and any licensing provisions.

Area Controls

3.3. The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 (<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>) gives inspectors powers on suspicion of disease to impose movement controls on the suspected premises. However, once disease has been confirmed, area controls and restrictions are imposed by a Declaratory Order.

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3.4. A Diseases of Poultry Declaratory Order can be made in respect of the area surrounding an IP. A Declaratory Order provides for the division of the Infected Area into protection and surveillance zones, the PZ being a minimum radius of three kilometres from the IP, and contained in a surveillance zone based on a minimum radius of ten kilometres from the IP. The Declaratory Order applies the provisions of Schedule 2 of the Diseases of Poultry Order to the infected area unless they are varied or excepted by the Declaratory Order.

3.5. The requirements of Schedule 2 are:

Protection Zones

- For at least 21 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the IP required by paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 to the 2003 Order and thereafter until the Secretary of State declares the PZ to have become part of the surveillance zone, the occupier of premises containing poultry shall ensure that –
 - any inspector who requires information as to the presence of poultry on those premises is supplied with such information as soon as practicable;
 - any veterinary inspector who visits the premises to examine the poultry and take samples is given all necessary assistance and information;
 - the poultry are kept in their living quarters or such other place where they can be isolated;
 - there is an appropriate means of disinfection at the entrance and exits of the premises;
 - poultry and hatching eggs are not moved from the premises except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector:
 - for the purpose of transport for immediate slaughter to a designated slaughterhouse, or
 - in the case of day old chicks or ready-to-lay pullets, to premises within the surveillance zone on which there are no other poultry, or
 - in the case of hatching eggs to a designated hatchery, subject to the eggs and their packing being disinfected before dispatch; and used litter and poultry manure are not removed or spread.
- The Order provides that no person shall –
 - move any poultry, eggs or carcasses within the zone, except that poultry may be transported without stopping through the zone on a major highway or railway.
 - hold any fair, market, show or other gathering of poultry or other birds.

Surveillance Zones

- The following restrictions apply within the SZ and I continue to apply for a period of at least 30 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the infected premises required by paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 to the 2003 Order and thereafter until the Secretary of State declares the restrictions to be lifted.
- The occupier of premises must ensure that –
 - any inspector who requires information as to presence of poultry on those premises is supplied with such information as soon as practicable;
 - poultry are not moved from the premises out of the zone except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector for the purpose of transport direct to a designated slaughterhouse outside the SZ;
 - hatching eggs are not moved from the premises out of the zone except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector for the purpose of transport direct to a designated hatchery and subject to the eggs and their packing being disinfected before dispatch; and
 - used litter and poultry manure are not moved out of the zone.
- The Order provides that no person shall –
 - move any poultry or hatching eggs into or within the zone except that poultry may be transported without stopping through the zone on a major highway or railway.
 - hold any fair, market, show or other gathering of poultry or other birds.
- The owner of any vehicle used to convey poultry, poultry carcasses, poultry offal, poultry feathers or eggs originating in an infected area, before it is so used, as soon as practicable after each time it is so used and in any event before it is so used again, must effectively clean and disinfect it.

Future Developments

3.6. A new Diseases of Poultry (England) Order is being considered to revoke and remake the 2003 Order. It is likely to provide for the possibility of:

- a Temporary Control Zone (TCZ) with local area movement restrictions on suspicion of disease on a premises.
- a Controlled Area with movement restrictions covering part, or all of, England around an Infected Area.
- Closure of footpaths in the Protection Zone

3.7. A Controlled Area would be implemented by means of a Declaratory Order.

3.8. Additional strategies could include:

- Increasing the size of the Infected Area
 - A cull of flocks in the immediate area (1km, 3km or possibly larger if necessary, to prevent the spread of disease)

3.9. There is a Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol for use in the event of a pre-emptive (or firebreak) cull at Volume 3: ND, Annex A.

3.10. This protocol sets out the requirements that must be followed if a pre-emptive cull is to be undertaken.

Vaccination in the Event of an Outbreak of ND

3.11. There is provision in the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 for the imposition of a compulsory vaccination zone. There is vaccine available with a marketing authorisation in England and is freely available for use.

Vaccination Area

3.12. Vaccination will be considered as a control measure in an outbreak of NDV. The decision to implement compulsory vaccination will depend on factors such as the density of poultry farms in the area.

Vaccination as a Control Measure

3.13. There are two types of ND vaccine available: inactivated vaccines, in which the viral component is killed, and live vaccines. Live vaccines can be delivered through spray, aerosolisation, drinking water or direct inoculation. This means that they can be delivered to a large number of birds relatively quickly and effectively. Inactivated vaccines may only be delivered by direct inoculation, which would be impractical on a large scale.

3.14. Current vaccines protect birds against clinical disease caused by NDV, but do not protect against infection. Infected vaccinated birds will excrete the virus, but in relatively small amount, and will remain apparently healthy.

Additional Controls

- Export health certificates for live poultry and hatching eggs will be withdrawn. Consignments of live birds, day old chicks and if possible poultry meat exported during the risk period would be identified and authorities in the importing country notified.
- Disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration would be implemented immediately

Further Action

3.15. Once Newcastle disease is confirmed, the main elements of this plan are brought into action. In particular:

- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 outlines emergency preparedness & mobilisation
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 4 describes outbreak management
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 5 sets out the main elements of the Communications Plan;
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 6 describes the strategic, tactical and operational organisations and structures.

3.16. These last two sections are augmented by the SVS instructions and the local office contingency plans.

SECTION 4. Outbreak Management – ND

Health and Safety and Staff Welfare

4.1. All staff in contact with diseased birds must follow the precautions detailed in the relevant risk assessment and are required to use personal protective equipment.

4.2. Information and guidance for anyone who may be involved in working with poultry that may be affected with ND may be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/HSforal.pdf>

4.3. Non Defra personnel should also seek health and safety guidance from their employer or the HPA.

Biosecurity Guidance

4.4. Anyone coming into contact with poultry or their manure/litter runs the risk of spreading animal diseases. Biosecurity is the prevention of disease causing agents entering or leaving a livestock premises. It involves a number of measures and protocols designed to prevent potential disease causing agents being spread from one premises to another.

4.5. Guidance has been produced for all those who go onto farms. It applies to everyone who enters a farm or premises with farm animals or enters land used for grazing or keeping farm animals. It applies to all animal diseases covered and includes poultry. It deals with the precautions to be taken when entering or leaving any premises with farm animals in the absence of an outbreak of animal disease, after confirmation of an outbreak of an animal disease, and to premises under specific animal disease restrictions. All personnel implementing this contingency plan in the field must follow this guidance. It is at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/biosecurity_guidance.pdf

4.6. Poultry owners, (particularly those with backyard flocks), game and wild bird keepers should keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents and other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores. Owners are encouraged to have an active rodent and pest control system in place, and should be vigilant for evidence of vermin and monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping.

4.7. Further advice for poultry keepers is at Volume 3: ND, Annex B and may be found on the Defra website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/poultrybiosec.pdf>

4.8. This advice, and the health and safety guidance set out in this Plan, will be reissued and brought to all poultry keepers' attention in the event of an outbreak of ND. Defra Animal Disease Control Division will provide access to use existing poultry sector databases to mail the guidance and Press Releases. Any established networks that have been developed by Defra EDPC division with respect to Farm Health Planning Initiatives (under the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy) will be used as an additional communication channel with industry, veterinary bodies and other bodies to alert poultry keepers to available best practice advice.

Animal Welfare

General Welfare Responsibilities

4.9. There is a responsibility on all involved with the keeping of poultry to anticipate problems and to take steps to mitigate the effects. Guidance would be issued by Defra to poultry keepers in advance of, or in the early stages, of movement restrictions being put in place. If welfare problems arise which cannot be alleviated by management or husbandry practices, poultry keepers will be given the opportunity to move their birds under licence. Such movements may include movement to slaughter for the food chain or to more suitable land or buildings. For example, broilers and spent hens in infected areas may be permitted to move to slaughter. In circumstances where healthy birds are unable to be moved off farm, and welfare problems are likely to result, a welfare disposal scheme may operate.

4.10. In order to reduce the risk of exposure it may be necessary to house poultry. Free-range producers should ensure that adequate contingency arrangements are in place for providing for the welfare of free-range birds when they need to be kept housed.

4.11. In these circumstances a welfare disposal scheme could be introduced, following a declaration by a veterinary surgeon that the birds in question are suffering (or will suffer in the near future) welfare problems, which are directly attributable to the movement restrictions. Defra will arrange the killing and disposal of birds. The killing will take place on farms, not in slaughterhouses.

4.12. There would be no payment for birds slaughtered under a disposal scheme. This is in line with current Government policy.

4.13. The Head of Livestock Strategy Division, in consultation with the Heads of Animal Welfare Division, Animal Welfare Veterinary Division and EDPC Division will draw up a contingency plan for such measures and will consult stakeholders on it.

4.14. The following poultry enterprises maybe at greatest risk of welfare problems if disease control measures are introduced:

Point of Lay Birds

4.15. Point of lay birds will need to be moved from rearer to laying accommodation. If laying accommodation can be found within the same movement restriction zone then welfare issues will not arise. However if there is no laying accommodation available within the zone, and movement of birds cannot be licensed to any other suitable premises these birds may present a welfare issue.

Broilers

4.16. Broilers, hens and other poultry in Protection and Surveillance zones and under restrictions may also need to enter welfare disposal scheme when they cannot move to slaughter houses and instigation of on farm contingency plans do not adequately prevent welfare problems from developing.

Hatcheries

4.17. Hatcheries produce day old chicks, which are then delivered to rearing units. Current legislation only allows the hatcheries to deliver day old chicks to rearing units only if they are located in the same infected area. However it is not felt that a welfare disposal scheme would be required for this category of bird because hatcheries on the whole will be aware that there is no capacity on rearing farms and can destroy the chicks with the eggs humanely at the hatchery.

Operational Procedures

Vaccination

4.18. There are two types of ND vaccine available: inactivated vaccines, in which the viral component is killed, and live vaccines. Live vaccines can be delivered through spray, aerosolisation, drinking water or direct inoculation. This means that they can be delivered to a large number of birds relatively quickly and effectively. Inactivated vaccines may only be delivered by direct inoculation, which would be impractical on a large scale.

4.19. Current vaccines protect birds against clinical disease caused by NDV, but do not protect against infection. Infected vaccinated birds will excrete the virus, but in relatively small amount, and will remain apparently healthy

Initial Investigation

4.20. For details on operational procedures to be followed at the initial investigation stage refer to Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3.

Valuation

4.21. Where appropriate poultry will be valued according to standard rate cards. This system is used for valuing poultry flocks being culled for salmonella control and the range of species and husbandry types for which cards are available has been extended in consultation with the industry. In addition specialist poultry valuers may be required for valuation of species not covered by the cards and for resolving disputes.

Compensation

4.22. Compensation is payable at 100% of the market value for birds that are not affected with disease at the time of slaughter. Compensation is not payable for diseased or dead birds. Consideration is being given (without commitment) to the situation where birds die between the time of report/suspicion and confirmation of disease. The number of birds not diseased is recorded at the initial veterinary inquiry. However, this is an incentive to report suspicion of disease at the earliest opportunity and to allow slaughter to be undertaken as rapidly as possible. To calculate the amount of compensation, birds are counted and valued.

Slaughter

4.23. In the event of ND being identified the slaughter of poultry would be considered as a control measure in order to eliminate disease. Depending on the scale and nature of the outbreak vaccination will also be considered as a control measure. See Volume 3: ND, Section 3 and Annex A for details on Disease Control Strategy and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol.

Disposal

4.24. In an outbreak of ND the disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration would be implemented immediately. However, pyre burning will not be considered for the disposal of poultry. See Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 for current disposal options.

Cleansing and Disinfection of Affected Premises

4.25. Preliminary cleansing and disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of Defra and will be undertaken and funded by Defra. Secondary disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of the owner.

Surveillance Visits

The Protection Zone

4.26. On all poultry premises within the Protection Zone there will be regular clinical inspection and examination to look for evidence of ND. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area, samples will

be collected from poultry on all premises in the PZ and submitted for laboratory examination.

The Surveillance Zone

4.27. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area a statistically significant number of poultry premises will be inspected for signs of disease and samples collected for submission to laboratories. Premises with waterfowl will be subject to targeted surveillance because clinical disease is not always apparent in infected waterfowl.

Wild Bird Population

4.28. If there is epidemiological evidence to suggest that wild birds may have a role in the local spread of the disease, this may be investigated further if practical. The investigation may involve collection of dead wild birds for laboratory investigation.

IP/DC

4.29. When the cleansing and disinfection of infected premises has been completed satisfactory, the premises will remain under the restrictions for at least 21 days. After this, sentinel poultry can be introduced to the premises, under licence. Sentinel poultry are healthy birds that are susceptible to ND infection. The purpose of introducing sentinel birds is to detect the presence of any remaining ND virus. It is assumed that if virus remains birds will become infected and display signs of disease.

4.30. The health of the sentinel poultry will be monitored over the next 21 days to detect signs of disease. The restrictions on the premises will be lifted if the sentinel poultry remain free from disease caused by ND over the next 21 day period. If the owner decides not to use sentinel poultry, the premises will remain under restrictions for 56 days from the date that cleansing and disinfection had been completed to the satisfaction of a veterinary inspector.

Area Restrictions / Zones

4.31. PZ controls will apply for at least 21 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of all infected premises, after which time the PZ becomes part of the SZ. The SZ will remain in place until a minimum period of 30 days has passed from the completion of the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the last IP.

Lifting of Restrictions on the Premises

4.32. The infected area will be lifted after all surveillance visits and laboratory tests have been reported as negative, indicating that no ND virus remains.

Serology

Surveillance

4.33. Serological surveillance may be carried out for a number of reasons, including epidemiology and declaring surveillance and protection zones to be free from disease. Serological surveillance in support of lifting restrictions should not commence until at least 21 days following preliminary cleansing and disinfection of an infected premises.

Diagnostic Testing

4.34. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency at Weybridge provides the diagnostic testing service for ND.

4.35. Personnel required to undertake blood sampling will be recruited and trained under the co-ordination of the Human Resources Services Division. Personnel could be drawn from veterinary/agricultural students and from local Job Centres.

Expert Group

4.36. A permanently operational expert group comprising of epidemiologists, veterinary scientists and virologists, has been established to maintain an expertise in order to assist the competent authority in ensuring preparedness against an outbreak of ND.

4.37. In the event of an outbreak of Newcastle disease, the ND Expert Group will be convened and its membership expanded to cover diseases of poultry and will be chaired by the CVO/DCVO.

4.38. The expert group will be a strategic/tactical level group of specialists whose role will be to provide advice to senior management on surveillance programmes, analyse information and advise on control strategies. They will report to the CVO and the NDCC.

National Emergencies Epidemiology Group

4.39. Sufficient training has been undertaken to provide enough trained personnel to mount several epidemiology groups in the event of an outbreak of ND. The intention is to have at least two veterinarians trained in epidemiology in each Region.

4.40. In the event of an outbreak, the group(s) will be alerted by the NDCC and mobilised in the field as soon as the disease is confirmed. The primary task of the team is to provide the National and Local Disease Control Centres with a report, which meets with relevant Commission guidelines. The team will also advise on sanitation and carcase disposal.

Detection of Notifiable Disease in Avian Quarantine

Authorised Under Commission Decision 2000/666

Quarantine is designed to contain disease so a quarantine incident does not constitute a disease outbreak unless and until there is evidence that disease has escaped.

Clinical or laboratory evidence of disease will be reported to Defra. The [CVO or DCVO] will be alerted and an urgent telephone conference will then be convened as soon as sufficient facts have been established.

On receipt of a positive or strongly suspicious laboratory result or clinical report, the [CVO or DCVO] will convene an urgent meeting of the NEEG to interpret the initial veterinary inquiry findings for ADPG. ADPG will then decide what action is appropriate with the devolved CVO taking a lead role if applicable. The SVS routinely collates key information on quarantine in order to support this process.

Strategic level decisions should not be required. Operational level decisions will be made by the local DVM. The AHDO should be able to provide sufficient resources to deal with a single incident.

Communications will follow the 'amber' model in the generic contingency plan as appropriate to the nature of the incident.

Public health risks will be managed in accordance with guidance provided in section 1.

Further detail is provided in Viper Chapter 21C.

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SECTION 5. Legislation

5.1. Much of the disease control strategy is based on European legislation implemented in our domestic laws. Council Directive 2005/94/EC covers the control of avian influenza of the subtypes H5 and H7 in poultry and other captive birds and replaced Directive 92/40/EEC.

2.2 The Commission has also introduced various Decisions to supplement the provisions of the Directive. These are being regularly reviewed and replaced.

2.3 This Section describes the domestic legislation made or to be made for the control of avian influenza.

Animal Health Act 1981

2.4 The Animal Health Act 1981 provides powers for the control of outbreaks of AI and ND. It was amended in 2002 to provide more powers to deal with foot and mouth disease and these powers were extended by the Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England & Wales) Order in 2003 so that they are now exercisable in relation to AI and ND. The Act, as amended, provides for

- slaughter of diseased poultry, poultry suspected of disease, poultry exposed to disease and poultry which the Secretary of State thinks should be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease.
- payment of compensation for birds that are slaughtered but are not diseased.
- publication of a slaughter protocol prior to exercising the power to impose a preventive or firebreak cull. Emergency vaccination would have to be considered prior to any cull, and, if not used, the reasons would have to be published.
- veterinary inspectors to have powers to enter premises to ascertain whether disease anti-bodies exist, whether any animal is or was infected with disease and whether any causative agent of disease is present
- publication of biosecurity guidance
- preparation and review of a national contingency plan

Legislation Transposing the Directive

2.5 *The Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) (No 2) Order 2006 (the AI Order)*, made under the Animal Health Act 1981, implements the bulk of Council Directive 2005/94/EEC for the control of avian influenza in poultry and other captive birds (the vaccination

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requirements are implemented separately). The measures in the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 are revoked insofar as they relate to avian influenza.

The AI Order includes provisions for the following:

- Notification of suspicion of AI in poultry and other captive birds.
- Power to impose measures to control both highly pathogenic and low pathogenic avian influenza in poultry and other captive birds.
- Power to impose movement restrictions on a suspect premises.
- power to declare a temporary control zone around the suspect premises . A temporary movement restriction zone can also be imposed covering the whole or part of England.
- Entry to premises for the purposes of veterinary inquiry.
- Where highly pathogenic avian influenza is confirmed, the power to declare a Protection Zone (minimum 3km) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10km) around the infected premises. A Restricted Zone can also be declared covering part or the whole of England.
- Where low pathogenic avian influenza is confirmed, the power to declare a low pathogenic Restricted Zone around the infected premises (minimum 1 km).
- Ability to derogate from some control measures subject to risk assessment.
- Measures to reduce and control the spread of virus in mammals including pigs.
- C & D of buildings used to house poultry and other captive birds, their surroundings, the vehicles used for transport and all equipment likely to be contaminated.
- Surveillance for avian influenza.

2.6 *The Avian Influenza (Vaccination) (England) Regulations 2006* implement the vaccination requirements of Council Directive 2005/94/EEC. The Directive prohibits vaccination of birds against avian influenza unless with Defra's consent. Such consent for emergency vaccination can be given without Commission approval if a risk assessment indicates that there is a significant threat of avian influenza spreading within or into the country due to an outbreak in another nearby country and certain movement conditions are put in place. The Directive also permits Defra to give consent for preventive vaccination based on a risk assessment but only subject to Commission approval of a preventive vaccination plan. Current vaccination policy in England is described at paragraph [3.26] below.

The Commission Decisions

2.7 *Preventive Measures Decision* (2005/734 (as amended)) and Preventive Measures (Zoos) Decision (2005/744). [Replacement instruments expected]

The power to impose preventive measures subject to a risk assessment (including housing of birds and a ban on bird gatherings subject to a licensing regime) are now included in the AI Order.

Decision 2005/744 allows member states to vaccinate birds kept in zoos. The Commission has agreed the UK's vaccination plan and this will be implemented by a revision of the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (no 2) Regulations 2005. A decision on whether to allow such vaccination of zoo birds to go ahead will be made based on a risk assessment.

2.8 *H5N1 in Poultry Decision* (replacement of Decision 2006/135 agreed on 4 May 2006)

This Decision supplements the Directive in an outbreak of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza in poultry and will be transposed by the Avian Influenza (H5N1 in Poultry) (England) Regulations 2006 . This will provide for:

- additional restrictions in control zones (in the Decision called Area A and Area B) around a premises where there is a suspect or confirmed case of H5N1 in poultry. These apply to poultry and day old chicks, other captive birds, hatching eggs, wild game products and poultry by products but derogations are allowed.
- that Area A on suspicion will be the same as the temporary control zone declared under the AI Order and be a minimum of 10 km. Area B will be the same as all or part of the temporary movement restriction zone declared under the AI Order.
- that Area A on confirmation will be the same as the protection and surveillance zones declared under the AI Order. Area B will be the same as all or part of the restricted zone declared under the AI Order.
- a ban on bird gatherings in Area B;

2.9 *H5N1 in Wild Birds Decision* (replacement of Decision 2006/115 agreed on 16 June 2006)

This Decision provides for controls if the H5N1 strain of avian influenza is found in wild birds. It will be implemented by the Avian Influenza (H5N1 in Wild Birds) (England) Order 2006. This will provide for:

- Declaration of a control area with minimum 3 km radius within a monitoring area of minimum 10 km radius around the place where the infected wild bird was found;

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- Derogations on the declaration of areas, the size and duration of the areas based on a risk assessment;
- Veterinary inspection of all commercial poultry premises in the control area. Targeted risk based visits to non commercial poultry and other captive bird holdings;
- Increased biosecurity, wild bird surveillance and publicity campaigns in the control area;
- Movements from both areas of poultry, day old chicks and other captive birds prohibited but derogations allowed for movements of poultry and day old chicks.
- Prohibition on movements from the control area for the following (but derogations allowed):
 - hatching eggs;
 - meat and meat products from poultry and wild feathered game;
 - by products from poultry, wild feathered game and other captive birds;
 - unprocessed manure.
- A ban in both areas on the hunting of wild birds, the release of game birds and bird gatherings.

2.10 The table below indicates the local veterinary action to be taken in relation to the level of suspicion.

SUMMARY OF INITIAL ACTION ON SUSPECT CASES

Level	AI
0	All restrictions on premises lifted no further action.
1	Suspect birds left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
2	Sick birds may be killed. Suspect flock left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
3	All poultry on the premises are pre-emptively slaughtered. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed. Area restrictions imposed. Contact Public Health Partners

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4	Would not apply
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SECTION 6. Disease Control Strategy

6.1. The disease control strategy adopted will be consistent with the UK's EU obligations and in line with the appropriate EU legislation. The Government's objective in tackling AI will be to eradicate the disease and to restore the UK's disease-free status as quickly as possible. In doing so, Government will seek to select control strategies which:

- minimise the number of poultry which need to be slaughtered, either to control the disease or on welfare grounds, and which keeps poultry welfare problems to a minimum;
- cause the least possible disruption to the food, farming and tourism industries, to visitors to the countryside, and to rural communities and the wider economy;
- minimise damage to the environment and protecting public health; and
- minimise the burden on taxpayers and the public at large.

Temporary Control Measures – Separation from Wild Birds

6.2. In the event of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) being found or suspected in poultry or other captive birds in Great Britain, all poultry owners nationwide may be required, wherever practicable, to move birds indoors as soon as possible. In cases where housing is not practicable, the keeper may be required to take all reasonable measures to minimise contact of poultry or captive birds with wild birds.

6.3. These measures may be invoked as a precautionary measure to avoid the spread of disease while an outbreak is investigated by declaration of an avian influenza prevention zone under the Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) (no 2) Order 2006 (AI Order). As information about the source of the outbreak becomes available, the Government's strategy would be to lift or reduce the requirements as soon as possible.

6.4. Subject to a risk assessment, the Government may also invoke these measures in the event of an increased likelihood of disease introduction into Great Britain or if H5N1 is found in wild birds in Great Britain.

Temporary Control Measures – National Movement Ban

6.5. In the event of HPAI being found in poultry in Great Britain (or in the case of H5N1 suspected), the Government would require short term national movement controls on all poultry and eggs. National or regional movement controls may also be introduced in the event of HPAI being found in captive birds or strains other than H5N1 suspected in poultry, although this would not be automatic and would be subject to a veterinary risk assessment. The

impacts of such controls would be mitigated by the introduction of licensed low risk movements as quickly as the risk allows.

6.6. These measures would be invoked as a precautionary measure to avoid the spread of disease while an outbreak is being investigated, it is however expected to last for several days.

3.7 National or regional movement controls would be implemented through the declaration of zones under the AI Order as described below.

Premises Controls on suspicion of avian influenza

3.8 The [AI Order](#) gives inspectors powers to impose restrictions by notice on premises suspected of being infected with avian influenza. The measures in Schedule 1 of the Order are applied and, if necessary, Schedule 2. Derogations can be applied to some of the measures in certain circumstances based on a veterinary risk assessment.

Premises Controls on confirmation of HPAI or LPAI

3.9 The first case will be confirmed by the CVO following laboratory diagnosis

3.10 Premises where disease has been confirmed are known as infected premises (IPs); birds that have been exposed to infection through contact with the infected premises are known as dangerous contacts (DCs).

- All poultry on IPs will be culled. The CVO may also authorise the culling of flocks before confirmation of disease (known as slaughter on suspicion). This would require strong suspicion on clinical grounds of disease (Level 3) from veterinary staff on the ground and at HQ. The case will be stronger where there is a strong likelihood of disease spread if the birds remain alive. This is most likely to apply:-
 - a) On the first reported case in the country;
 - b) In the case of a large outbreak, particularly where the suspect premises is in a previously unaffected area.
- Meat and eggs from poultry that left an HPAI infected premises from the probable date of infection will be traced and disposed of up to retail outlet level wherever systems are robust enough to allow for tracing.
- Dangerous contacts will be identified. Where the risk of exposure to virus is high, the poultry will be culled and laboratory samples taken. Where the risk of exposure is assessed as not high, restrictions on the premises will be in place for 21 days and regular veterinary visits undertaken.
- The measures in Schedule 1 and 2 of the AI Order will be applied by notice on the IP or high risk DC if HPAI is confirmed and Schedule 6 if LPAI is confirmed until all birds have been culled, cleansing and disinfection has been completed and a veterinary inspector is satisfied that disease no longer exists on the premises.

- Derogations may be applied to the slaughter requirement in special category premises based on risk assessment. Special category premises are pet shops, non commercial holdings, wild life parks, zoos and circuses, fenced areas where birds are kept for scientific or conservation purposes and parts of premises where birds belonging to officially recognised rare breeds are kept.

Area Controls on suspicion of avian influenza

3.11 The AI Order allows for zones to be declared based on risk. These are:

- a temporary control zone (TCZ) around the suspect premises; and
- a temporary movement restriction zone (TMRZ) on a regional or national level.

3.12 There is flexibility in the measures that can be included in these zones. If HPAI was suspected it is likely that the TCZ would reflect the requirements of protection and surveillance zones declared on confirmation, with the TMRZ replicating the requirements of the restricted zone.

3.13 If H5N1 is suspected in poultry legislation implementing the Commission Decision would be applied. Area A would cover the TCZ and Area B all or part of the TMRZ and provide for additional measures.

3.14 If LPAI was suspected it is likely that any zones would contain similar requirements to an LPAI restricted zone declared on confirmation.

Area Controls on confirmation of HPAI

3.15 If HPAI is confirmed in poultry or other captive birds the AI Order provides for the declaration of a controlled zone consisting of:

- a protection zone (PZ) (minimum radius of three kilometres from the IP) and contained in
- a surveillance zone (SZ) (minimum radius of ten kilometres from the IP).

3.16 A restricted zone (RZ) would also be declared covering the whole or part of Great Britain.

3.17 A derogation to the requirement for a controlled zone can be made based on veterinary risk assessment when HPAI is confirmed in a hatchery or in other captive birds on special category premises.

3.18 If H5N1 is confirmed in poultry, legislation implementing the Commission Decision would be applied. Area A would cover the PZ and SZ and Area B all or part of the RZ and provide for additional measures.

Protection Zone (PZ)

3.19 On premises where poultry or other captive birds are kept the measures in the PZ include:

- Records of movements on and off the premises;
- Isolation of poultry and other captive birds from wild birds;
- Licensing of poultry manure, litter and slurry off the premises;
- Restrictions on movements of poultry, other captive birds, mammals, eggs or carcasses unless licensed;
- Biosecurity measures for people and vehicles entering and leaving premises;
- A ban on the release of game birds into the wild;
- A ban on gatherings of birds.

There are also requirements for the marking and control of fresh poultry meat from birds originating in the PZ .

The PZ must be in place for at least 21 days after the preliminary C & D of the IP and until the Secretary of State declares the protection zone to have become part of the surveillance zone

Surveillance Zone (SZ)

3.20 The measures in the SZ are similar to the PZ except that isolation of poultry and captive birds is not required (although could be implemented by an avian influenza prevention zone), movement restrictions do not apply to other captive birds and there are no requirements for the marking and control of fresh poultry meat.

The SZ must be in place for at least 30 days after the preliminary C & D of the IP and until the Secretary of State declares the zone revoked.

Restricted Zone (RZ)

3.21 The Directive allows for the declaration of an RZ and the measures in the zone to be based on risk assessment. Policy is that on confirmation of HPAI an RZ would cover the whole or part of Great Britain and be reduced as risk allows. Movement restrictions will apply to poultry, day old chicks and eggs with licensing conditions in proportion to the risk. The duration of the RZ will be based on a risk assessment and will be in place until the Secretary of State revokes it.

3.22 If H5N1 was confirmed in poultry legislation implementing the Commission Decision would be applied. Area B would cover all or part of the RZ and provide for additional measures.

Area Controls on confirmation of LPAI

Low pathogenic avian influenza restricted zone (LPAI RZ)

3.23 If LPAI is confirmed in poultry or other captive birds the AI Order provides for the declaration of a restricted zone based on a minimum radius of one kilometre from the IP. A derogation to this requirement or to the measures in the zone can be made based on veterinary risk assessment when LPAI is confirmed in a hatchery or special category premises.

3.24 On premises where poultry or other captive birds are kept the measures in the LPAI RZ include:

- Licensing of poultry manure, litter and slurry off the premises;
- Restrictions on movements of poultry, other captive birds, mammals and eggs unless licensed;
- Biosecurity measures for people and vehicles entering and leaving premises;
- A ban on the release of game birds into the wild;
- A ban on gatherings of birds.

Further measures can be included if necessary to reduce the risk of spread of disease.

The LPAI RZ must be in place for at least 21 days after the preliminary C & D of the IP and until the Secretary of State declares the zone revoked.

Controls on mammals – Part 7 of the AI Order

3.25 The Order provides for:

- Tests for avian influenza virus on pigs (and other mammals if necessary) kept on premises where avian influenza is confirmed in poultry or kept on contact premises; Movement restrictions on such animals until they no longer pose a disease risk.
- Slaughter of mammals affected or suspected of being affected with the virus;
- Surveillance and restrictions on premises by means of a notice or by declaration of an avian influenza (restrictions on mammals) zone. There is flexibility on the size of the zone and measures imposed.

Vaccination

3.26 Vaccination does offer potential benefits in disease control but currently available vaccines have a number of disadvantages. In particular, although they reduce mortality, it is likely that some vaccinated birds would still be capable of transmitting the disease if they became infected, while not displaying the symptoms. This would slow down the time taken to detect and eradicate the disease. For these reasons, we do not plan to use currently available vaccine in advance of an outbreak and it is unlikely to be used as an immediate disease control response. Enhanced biosecurity and surveillance, early detection and rapid control measures remain the most effective

means of eradicating disease. However, we continue to keep the position under review in the light of scientific developments.

- 3.27 The need for vaccination to protect zoo birds, , has also been considered due to conservation and biodiversity reasons and the added advantages of zoos with a high level of biosecurity and veterinary surveillance. A plan to allow voluntary vaccination of zoo birds has been approved by the Commission and a decision to allow the vaccination of zoo birds will be made subject to a risk assessment.

Additional Controls

3.28 Export health certificates for live poultry and hatching eggs will be withdrawn. Consignments of live birds, day old chicks and if possible poultry meat exported during the risk period would be identified and authorities in the importing country notified.

3.29 Disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration would be implemented immediately

3.30 Additional strategies could include a cull of flocks in the immediate area (1km, 3km or possibly larger if necessary, to prevent the spread of disease)

3.31 There is a Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol for use in the event of a pre-emptive (or firebreak) cull at Volume 3: AI, Annex A. This protocol sets out the requirements that must be followed if a pre-emptive cull is to be undertaken.

Further Action

- 3.32 Once AI is confirmed, the main elements of this plan are brought into action. In particular:
- Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 outlines emergency preparedness & mobilisation
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 4 describes outbreak management
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 5 sets out the main elements of the Communications Plan;
 - Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 6 describes the strategic, tactical and operational organisations and structures.

These last two sections are augmented by the SVS instructions and the local office contingency plans.

SECTION 7. Outbreak Management – AI [RL changes highlighted]

Health and Safety and Staff Welfare

7.1. Everyone in contact with diseased birds must follow the precautions detailed in the relevant risk assessment. Because of the possible different strains and varying infectivity of each strain of avian influenza virus to people, a precautionary approach should be taken. Anyone with medical conditions that may increase the risk of infection with avian influenza, such as respiratory disease or a reduced immuno-competence will be advised to stay away from poultry farms, avoid all contact with infected birds and seek appropriate medical advice.

7.2. All who have had, or are likely to have contact with infected birds will need to be provided with information as to how to protect themselves and their families from infection.

7.3. To protect against infection, a hierarchy of control measures are needed which include:

- safe working practice in accordance with the risk assessment
- the wearing of all appropriate personal protective equipment by poultry workers/handlers/cullers/veterinarians;
- safe disposal of used personal protective clothing and equipment
- use of the antiviral oseltamivir ('Tamiflu') or other appropriate antiviral agent for the prescribed period by all who are considered to be at risk of infection and for whom antiviral therapy is not contraindicated
- vaccination with seasonal flu vaccine of all those considered to be at risk of infection and for whom vaccine is not contraindicated
- monitoring of health status of persons exposed to infected birds
- guidance to those at risk of infection on the personal hygiene measures to be taken to protect their health and to prevent the spread of infection.

7.4. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation has advised that in the event of an outbreak of HPAI in poultry, those exposed to infection should be offered seasonal flu vaccine as a precaution against the possibility of co-infection with human flu. Vaccine should be given as soon as possible, either before or at time of exposure, and at least within 48 hours of initial exposure.

7.5. Antiviral therapy should be given as soon as possible, either before or at the time of exposure, and at least within 48 hours of initial exposure.

7.6. Information and guidance for anyone working with poultry that may be affected with avian influenza, may be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/HSforal.pdf>

7.7. Persons not employed by Defra should also seek health and safety guidance from their employer's Health and Safety adviser or medical practitioner. Advice is also available from the Health and Safety Executive on their website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

Notification of Disease

7.8. Where a suspect (level 2 or 3) or confirmed case of avian influenza in birds is notified to the DVM, the DVM shall notify:

- the Health Protection Agency's duty officer at the Centre for Emergency Response, Porton Down on 01980 612100 (24 hour telephone response).
- the local Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC) and Director of Public Health within the Primary Care Trust.

7.9. Upon receipt of a notification of suspected or confirmed avian influenza in birds, the role of the Health Protection Agency is to support Defra and the State Veterinary Service in the investigation and control of the incident in relation to the protection of human health. This support will include the surveillance of influenza diseases in the populations at risk associated with the outbreak, provision of advice and guidance on public health control measures, medical interventions and health advice to the public. Specifically the HPA will:

- Notify the local Health Protection Unit in the area within which the disease is occurring
- Notify the Department of Health
- Liaise with the local Director of Public Health in the area where the disease is occurring as to the steps needed for the protection of human health and communication with the public
- Locally, through the Health Protection Unit and in consultation with the local Director of Public Health and NHS colleagues and Defra's occupational health services, coordinate the investigation of human health implications of confirmed disease in birds and the provision of all necessary medical interventions, such as the administration of antiviral drugs and 'flu vaccine, to those at risk of avian influenza infection including to those at risk of infection as a result of occupational exposure.
- Locally through the Health Protection Unit and in consultation with the local Director of Public Health and DVM, ensure that a joint Incident Control Team is convened as appropriate

Biosecurity Guidance

7.10. Anyone coming into contact with poultry or their manure/litter runs the risk of spreading animal diseases. Biosecurity is the prevention of disease causing agents entering or leaving a livestock premises. It involves a number of measures and protocols designed to prevent potential disease causing agents being spread from one premises to another.

7.11. Guidance has been produced for all those who go onto farms. It applies to everyone who enters a farm or premises with farm animals or enters land used for grazing or keeping farm animals. It applies to all animal diseases covered and includes poultry. It deals with the precautions to be taken when entering or leaving any premises with farm animals in the absence of an outbreak of animal disease, after confirmation of an outbreak of an animal disease, and to premises under specific animal disease restrictions. All personnel implementing this contingency plan in the field must follow this guidance. It is at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/biosecurity_guidance.pdf

7.12. Poultry owners, (particularly those with backyard flocks), game and wild bird keepers should keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents and other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores. Owners are encouraged to have an active rodent and pest control system in place, and should be vigilant for evidence of vermin and monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping.

7.13. Further advice for poultry keepers is at Volume 3: AI, Annex B and may be found on the Defra website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/poultrybiosec.pdf>

7.14. This advice, and the health and safety guidance set out in this Plan is kept under review. It will be reissued and brought to all poultry keepers' attention in the event of an outbreak of AI or ND. Defra ADC Division will provide access to use existing poultry sector databases to mail the guidance and Press Releases. Any networks that have been developed by Defra EDPC division with respect to Farm Health Planning Initiatives (under the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy) will be used as an additional communication channel with industry, veterinary bodies and other bodies to alert poultry keepers to available best practice advice.

Animal Welfare

General Welfare Responsibilities [RL – have contacted Kirk Thompson to see if he has rewritten this]

7.15. For all involved with the keeping of poultry there is a responsibility to anticipate problems and to take steps to mitigate the effects. Guidance will be issued by Defra to poultry keepers in advance of, or in the early stages of,

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movement restrictions being put in place. If welfare problems arise which cannot be alleviated by management or husbandry practices, poultry keepers will be given the opportunity to move their birds under licence. Such movements may include movement to slaughter for the food chain or to more suitable land or buildings. For example broilers and spent hens in infected areas may be permitted to move to slaughter.

7.16. In order to reduce the risk of exposure it may be necessary to house poultry or otherwise keep them separate from wild birds. Free-range producers should ensure that adequate contingency arrangements are in place for providing for the welfare of free-range birds should they need to be kept housed. Defra has set out detailed guidance on how this can be done at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/pdf/separating.pdf>

7.17. The following poultry enterprises may be at greatest risk of welfare problems if disease control measures are introduced:

(i) Point of lay birds will need to be moved from rearer to laying accommodation. If laying accommodation can be found within the same movement restriction zone then welfare issues will not arise. However if there is no laying accommodation available within the zone, and movement of birds cannot be licenced to any other suitable premises these birds may present a welfare issue.

(ii) Broilers, hens and other poultry in Protection and Surveillance zones and under restrictions may also need to enter a welfare disposal scheme if they cannot be moved to slaughter houses and instigation of on farm contingency plans do not adequately prevent welfare problems from developing.

7.18. Hatcheries produce day old chicks, which are then delivered to rearing units. Current legislation allows the hatcheries to deliver day old chicks to rearing units only if they are located in the same infected area. However it is not felt that a welfare disposal scheme would be required for this category of bird because hatcheries on the whole will be aware that there is no capacity on rearing farms and can destroy the chicks and embryos humanely at the hatchery.

7.19. If it is considered appropriate and to prevent welfare standards from deteriorating a Livestock Welfare Disposal Scheme may be introduced. Following a declaration by a private veterinary surgeon that the birds in question are suffering (or will suffer in the near future) welfare problems, which are directly attributable to the movement restrictions. Defra will arrange and pay for the killing and disposal of birds. The killing may take place on farms.

7.20. Government policy is that no payment will be made to producers for the value of the birds slaughtered under such a Livestock Welfare Disposal Scheme.

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7.21. The Head of Livestock Strategy Division, in consultation with the Heads of Animal Welfare Division, Animal Welfare Veterinary Division and Exotic Disease Prevention and Control Division will draw up a contingency plan for such measures and will consult stakeholders on it.

Detection of Notifiable Disease in Avian Quarantine

Authorised Under Commission Decision 2000/666

Quarantine is designed to contain disease so a quarantine incident does not constitute a disease outbreak unless and until there is evidence that disease has escaped.

Clinical or laboratory evidence of disease will be reported to Defra. The [CVO or DCVO] will be alerted and an urgent telephone conference will then be convened as soon as sufficient facts have been established.

On receipt of a positive or strongly suspicious laboratory result or clinical report, the [CVO or DCVO] will convene an urgent meeting of the NEEG to interpret the initial veterinary inquiry findings for ADPG. ADPG will then decide what action is appropriate with the devolved CVO taking a lead role if applicable. The SVS routinely collates key information on quarantine in order to support this process.

Strategic level decisions should not be required. Operational level decisions will be made by the local DVM. The AHDO should be able to provide sufficient resources to deal with a single incident.

Communications will follow the 'amber' model in the generic contingency plan as appropriate to the nature of the incident.

Public health risks will be managed in accordance with guidance provided in section 1.

Further detail is provided in Viper Chapter 21C.

Operational Procedures

Vaccination

7.22. See Section 3.26.

Initial Investigation

7.23. For details on operational procedures to be followed at the initial investigation stage refer to Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3.

Valuation

7.24. Where appropriate poultry will be valued according to standard rate cards. This system is used for valuing poultry flocks being culled for salmonella control and the range of species and husbandry types for which cards are available has been extended in consultation with the industry. In addition specialist poultry valuers may be required for valuation of species not covered by the cards, including zoo birds and rare breeds, and for resolving disputes.

Compensation

7.25. Compensation is payable under the Animal Health Act 1981 at 100% of the market value for birds that are not affected with disease at the time of slaughter. Compensation is not payable for diseased or dead birds. . The number of birds not diseased and therefore eligible for compensation is assessed at the time of slaughter. In subsequent cases of disease spread birds would normally be slaughtered on suspicion or as dangerous contacts so they would be eligible for compensation.

Slaughter

7.26. Where slaughter of birds is required, the department will deploy a range of slaughter techniques including necking, gassing and electrocution, depending on the numbers, species and location of the birds. Contingency contracts are in place with poultry catchers and killers. See Volume 3: AI, Section 4 and Annex A for details on Disease Control Strategy and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol.

Disposal

7.27. In an outbreak of AI the disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration or rendering would be implemented immediately. See Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 for current disposal options.

Cleansing and Disinfection of affected premises

7.28. Preliminary cleansing and disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of Defra and will be undertaken and funded by Defra. Secondary disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of the owner.

Surveillance

The Protection Zone

7.29. On all poultry premises within the Protection Zone there will be regular clinical inspection and examination to look for evidence of AI. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area, samples will

be collected from poultry on all premises in the protection zone and submitted for laboratory examination.

The Surveillance Zone

7.30. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area a statistically significant number of poultry premises will be inspected for signs of disease and samples collected for submission to laboratories. Premises with waterfowl will be subject to targeted surveillance because clinical disease is not always apparent in infected waterfowl.

requirements for LPAI RZ needed here

Wild Bird Population

7.31. If there is epidemiological evidence to suggest that wild birds may have a role in the local spread of the disease, this will be investigated further where practical. The investigation may involve collection of dead wild birds for laboratory investigation.

Lifting of restrictions on the premises

IP/DC

7.32. When the cleansing and disinfection of infected premises has been completed satisfactorily, the premises will remain under restriction for at least 21 days. After this, sentinel poultry can be introduced to the premises, under licence. Sentinel poultry are healthy birds that are susceptible to AI infection. The purpose of introducing sentinel birds is to detect the presence of any remaining AI virus. It is assumed that if virus remains, birds will become infected and display signs of disease.

7.33. The health of the sentinel poultry will be monitored over the next 21 days to detect signs of disease. The restrictions on the premises will be lifted if the sentinel poultry remain free from disease caused by AI over the next 21-day period. If the owner decides not to use sentinel poultry, the premises will remain under restrictions for 56 days from the date that cleansing and disinfection had been completed to the satisfaction of a veterinary inspector.

Area/Zones

7.34. The duration of the zones are described in Section 3.

7.35. The infected area will be lifted after all surveillance visits and laboratory tests have been reported as negative, indicating that no AI virus remains.

Serology – Surveillance

7.36. Serological surveillance may be carried out for a number of reasons, including epidemiology and declaring surveillance and protection zones to be free from disease. Serological surveillance in support of lifting restrictions should not commence until at least 21 days following preliminary cleansing and disinfection of an infected premises.

Diagnostic Testing

7.37. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency at Weybridge provides the diagnostic testing service for AI.

7.38. Personnel required to undertake blood sampling will be recruited and trained under the co-ordination of the Human Resources Services Division. Personnel could be drawn from veterinary/agricultural students and from local Job Centres.

Expert Group

7.39. A permanently operational expert group comprising of epidemiologists, veterinary scientists and virologists, has been established to maintain an expertise in order to assist the competent authority in ensuring preparedness against an outbreak of AI.

7.40. In the event of an outbreak of avian influenza, the AI Expert Group will be convened and its membership expanded to cover diseases of poultry and will be chaired by the CVO/DCVO.

7.41. The expert group will be a strategic/tactical level group of specialists, whose role will be to provide advice to senior management on surveillance programmes, analyse information and advise on control strategies. They will report to the CVO and the NDCC.

National Emergencies Epidemiology Group (NEEG)

7.42. Sufficient training has been undertaken to provide enough trained personnel to provide epidemiology groups in the event of an outbreak of AI. The intention is to have at least two veterinarians trained in epidemiology in each Region.

7.43. In the event of an outbreak, the group(s) will be alerted by the NDCC and mobilised in the field as soon as the disease is confirmed. The primary task of the team is to provide the National and Local Disease Control Centres with a report, which meets with relevant Commission guidelines. The team will also advise on sanitation and carcase disposal.

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AVIAN INFLUENZA ANNEXES

Avian Influenza Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol – AI ANNEX A

1. The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 1734) came into force on 11 July 2003. It extends to AI and ND certain measures introduced by the Animal Health Act 2002, including the power to slaughter animals to prevent the spread of disease (a preventive or firebreak cull). The use of this power is circumscribed by legislation. In particular there is a need to have a disease control (slaughter) protocol and this requirement was introduced by The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (Biosecurity Guidance and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol) (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 2035). The power cannot be used unless the protocol has been published and vaccination has first been considered to prevent the spread of disease (Section 32D (2) of the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended). The purpose of this disease control (slaughter) protocol is to identify criteria to be considered and procedures to be followed should it be considered necessary to call on this new slaughter power.

2. The definition of 'poultry' in the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended has been extended to include all birds (Article 2 of the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 and the Diseases of Poultry (Wales) Order 2003).

Purpose for which the power would be used

3. This power would be used only where this is justified by the circumstances of the possibility of disease spreading and on the basis of sound veterinary, epidemiological and scientific advice.

The principal factors to be taken into account

4. A major factor will be to get ahead of the disease. A particular example would be to protect areas of dense poultry population. The slaughter would include those flocks (and, if necessary, other birds) which, should they become infected, would present a significant risk to the farming and poultry community more generally by contributing to onward spread. It is in such circumstances that effective preventative action may be necessary to safeguard the wider public interest. Species, geographical area and, if appropriate, type of farming would be relevant. Any decision to use the wider powers of slaughter would be taken in the light of an overall assessment of the risks, costs and benefits in a given situation. This could include not only risks of transmission but also the potential social and economic costs that would arise if effective and timely action were not taken.

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The procedure to be followed in reaching a decision

5. The steps to be taken comprise of:
 - (a) the identification of the poultry that are likely to contribute to spread of disease, based on epidemiological assessment, veterinary advice and local factors;
 - (b) the determination of which species are involved;
 - (c) consideration of exemptions on the basis of husbandry or other criteria, for example, rare breeds or genetic value;
 - (d) consideration of exemptions for hatcheries;
 - (e) the determination of the geographical area involved;
 - (f) the determination of the rules for inclusion or exclusion of poultry at the boundary of that area;
 - (g) analysis of risks, costs and benefits;
 - (h) the publication of an outline of the reasons why such a slaughter is needed.

The procedure by which poultry on a premises will be deemed to be included in a slaughter

6. Premises believed to contain poultry to be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease would be identified. A Veterinary Inspector would visit and ascertain if poultry meet the criteria for inclusion in the preventive cull.
7. The Veterinary Inspector would be required to explain the reasons to the owner and give him an opportunity to provide evidence if he believed the poultry should be exempted. A slaughter notice would be issued that states the powers under which slaughter is required and the reason why the owner's stock is included (with reference to the criteria for slaughter to prevent the spread of disease).

The means by which a particular decision to slaughter can be reviewed

8. Both as part of the slaughter notice and during explanations the owner must be made aware that they can ask the DVM to review the decision that their stock meets the criteria for the preventive slaughter and be advised how and by when this can be done.
9. The DVM, or deputy, must be available to hear such reviews. The following action would be taken:

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- they will consider the views of the owner as to why they believe the decision is wrong.
- they must ensure that the veterinary inspector has carried out a full and fair inquiry to establish if the poultry meet the appropriate criteria for inclusion in the cull.

Biosecurity Poultry Guidance – AI ANNEX B

Better Biosecurity Provides:

Peace of Mind, A Healthier Flock and a More Viable Business

All poultry keepers need to be aware of the need for strict biosecurity and hygiene on their premises:

Benefits:

- HELPS KEEP OUT exotic diseases such as Newcastle disease and avian influenza
- REDUCES THE RISK of zoonotic diseases such as salmonella becoming established
- LIMITS SPREAD of diseases and HELPS TO PROTECT your neighbours, public health and the countryside
- IMPROVES overall flock health
- CUTS COSTS of disease treatment
- REDUCES LOSSES and could improve farm profitability

How Disease Spreads:

- Movement of poultry, people, vehicles and equipment between and within farms
- Introduction of birds of low or unknown health status
- Contact with neighbours' flocks
- Using shared farm equipment and vehicles which have not been effectively cleansed and disinfected
- Contact with vermin and wild birds
- Birds drinking from contaminated water sources
- Birds eating contaminated feed
- Unsatisfactory cleaning and disinfection of vehicles, sheds, feeding troughs and other equipment

Important!

4. Make a flock health plan with your vet that includes the basic biosecurity measures in this guidance to reduce the risk disease spreading. Plans should include isolation for new stock and sampling procedures for certain diseases
5. Ensure that all records are accurate and up to date to allow traceability of produce through the food chain
6. Train your staff – ensure they understand that biosecurity and strict hygiene is important

How to Stop Disease – Keep Your Farm Clean!

- Don't bring infection onto your farm, or spread it around your farm, on your clothes, footwear or hands. Clean overalls and footwear must be worn when entering poultry farms. Protective clothing and footwear should be removed and either cleansed and disinfected, laundered or disposed of after use.
- Strictly limit and control access to poultry flocks. If possible the site should be fenced with a controlled entry point. Visitors and their vehicles should be limited and as far as possible kept away from poultry buildings and pastures
- Have pressure washers, brushes, hoses, water and an approved disinfectant available. Make sure they are used by visitors to clean vehicles, equipment and boots
- Keep farm access routes, parking areas, yards, areas around buildings and storage areas clean and tidy and well maintained. This helps avoid wild birds and animals being attracted onto the site and entering buildings and stores
- Wild birds can carry poultry diseases. Minimise contact between poultry and wild birds. Prevent accumulation of standing water and remove spilled feed that could attract wild birds. Maintain buildings to ensure that wild birds do not nest or roost in them
- Keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents or other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores

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- Have an active rodent and pest control system in place. Be vigilant for evidence of vermin. Monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping
- Supply only clean fresh drinking water to birds. Water lines and drinkers must be flushed through and cleaned regularly. In the case of free-range birds restrict access to possible sources of standing water used by wild birds
- Feed bins, hoppers and feeding equipment must be cleaned and maintained regularly. Feed silos and containers must be sealed to prevent animals and wild birds contaminating feed
- Feed should only be obtained from a mill or supplier that operates in accordance with relevant Defra and UKASTA Codes of Practice who will make available results of salmonella tests on request
- Damaged eggs, dead birds, litter and manure may carry disease. Dispose of them promptly and properly
- Clean and disinfect all vehicles after each journey. If possible, do not use the same vehicles for transporting birds, feed, manure or other wastes
- Regularly clean and disinfect all crates, containers and other equipment before and after use. Do not move any equipment into different poultry buildings without cleaning and disinfecting it first. This also applies to injecting, medicating or treating birds (DH/JW)
- At depopulation at the end of a cycle, thoroughly clean the building and all equipment, including ducting, drains and fans. Remove all surplus feed, dead birds and litter. Disinfect the premises and all equipment and carry out rodent and other pest control. Cleaning equipment and protective clothing should also be cleansed and disinfected

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Buying New Stock -

Always know the health status of birds you are buying or moving!

- Incoming stock should be kept properly isolated from the rest of the flock - discuss with your vet and agree a testing and monitoring programme
- Only place new stock in facilities which you know have been cleaned and disinfected
- Use separate equipment and staff or handle isolated stock last. Never re-enter your main flock buildings after dealing with isolated stock until you have washed and changed into cleaned overalls and boots
- Keep isolation buildings as near as possible to the farm entrance and as separate from other poultry buildings. Ensure buildings are in good repair and effectively prevent vermin from getting in and spreading any diseases

Be Vigilant!

- Look out for signs of disease in your flock
- Increased mortality, falling egg production and signs of respiratory problems may be early indicators of a disease problem
- If you suspect disease, ask your vet for advice as soon as possible. Do not wait for more evidence - some diseases can spread very quickly!

NEWCASTLE DISEASE

SECTION 1. Background

1.[d5]

Newcastle Disease

1.1. ND is a highly infectious disease affecting poultry and other birds. Disease is caused by infection with virulent strains of Newcastle disease virus (NDV). There are a variety of strains of NDV, which range in virulence. Low virulence strains may cause sub clinical or mild respiratory disease. Highly virulent strains can cause severe disease which is characterised by high death rates and a range of clinical signs. Control is targeted at strains with a high pathogenicity (ability to cause severe disease).

1.2. The severity of the disease also varies depending upon the species, degree of immunity and age of bird, environmental conditions and general health status of the flock.

1.3. Controls would apply to domestic fowls, turkeys, geese, ducks, guinea fowls, quails, pigeons, ratites (e.g. ostriches), pheasants and partridges reared or kept in captivity for breeding, the production of meat or eggs for consumption or eggs for restocking supplies of game.

1.4. It is possible that ND could be introduced to domestic poultry by contact with infective wild pigeons and other wild birds or indirectly through contamination of feed or objects. NDV can be carried on objects or clothing contaminated with excretions from infective birds, particularly faeces. Such material could be imported on clothing or shoes of people, that had been in contact with infective birds.

1.5. Illegal imports of live birds also pose a risk of introduction but this is difficult to quantify.

1.6. Good biosecurity reduces the risk of onward spread.

1.7. The ND virus has been shown to be infectious to humans and other animals, although severe disease has only been observed in birds. In humans infection occasionally results in mild disease characterised by conjunctivitis. The majority of human cases have occurred in laboratory workers or people handling live vaccines. NDV does not pose a significant risk to public health.

SECTION 2. Legislation

2.[d6]

2.1. Much of the disease control strategy is based on European legislation implemented in our domestic laws. This is supported by administrative provisions. This Annex describes these.

Animal Health Act 1981

2.2. The Animal Health Act 1981 provides powers for the control of outbreaks of AI and ND. It was amended in 2002 to provide more powers to deal with foot and mouth disease and these powers were extended by the Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England and Wales) Order in 2003 so that they are now exercisable in relation to AI and ND. The Act, as amended, provides for

- slaughter of diseased poultry, poultry suspected of disease, poultry exposed to disease and poultry which the Secretary of State thinks should be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease.
- payment of compensation for birds that are slaughtered but are not diseased.
- publication of a slaughter protocol prior to exercising the power to impose a preventive or firebreak cull. Emergency vaccination would have to be considered prior to any cull, and, if not used, the reasons would have to be published.
- veterinary inspectors to have powers to enter premises to ascertain whether disease anti-bodies exist, whether any animal is or was infected with disease and whether any causative agent of disease is present
- publication of biosecurity guidance
- preparation and review of a national contingency plan

The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003

2.3. The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003, made under the Animal Health Act 1981, Council Directive 92/66/EEC for the control of Newcastle disease. Its provisions include the following:

- Notification of suspicion of r ND in poultry and other captive birds.
- Imposition of movement controls on suspicion of disease.
- Entry to premises for the purposes of veterinary inquiry.
- Where disease is confirmed, the imposition of a Protection Zone (minimum 3km) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10km) around the infected premises by declaratory order.
- Cleansing and disinfection of buildings used to house poultry, their surroundings, the vehicles used for transport and all equipment likely to be contaminated;

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- Powers to require, by publication of a notice, the vaccination of any species of poultry in any given area and for any given period.

2.4. The Diseases of Poultry Order also extends provisions for investigating premises and imposing movement restrictions to all diseases of birds and all species of birds.

2.5. The table below indicates the local veterinary action to be taken in relation to the level of suspicion.

SUMMARY OF INITIAL ACTION ON SUSPECT CASES

Level	ND
0	All restrictions on premises lifted no further action.
1	Suspect birds left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
2	Sick birds may be killed. Suspect flock left alive and observed. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed.
3	All poultry on the premises are pre-emptively slaughtered. Samples submitted for laboratory diagnosis. Premises restrictions imposed. Area restrictions imposed.
4	<u>Would not apply</u>

SECTION 3. Disease Control Strategy

3.[d7]

3.1. The disease control strategy adopted will be consistent with the UK's EU obligations and in line with the appropriate EU legislation. The Government's objective in tackling ND will be to eradicate the disease and to restore the UK's disease-free status as quickly as possible. In doing so, Government will seek to select control strategies which:

- minimise the number of poultry which need to be slaughtered, either to control the disease or on welfare grounds, and which keeps poultry welfare problems to a minimum;
- cause the least possible disruption to the food, farming and tourism industries, to visitors to the countryside, and to rural communities and the wider economy;
- minimise damage to the environment and protecting public health; and
- minimise the burden on taxpayers and the public at large.

Premises Controls

The following measures will be applied on confirmation of Newcastle disease: (Note: The first case will be confirmed by the CVO following laboratory diagnosis)

3.2. Premises where disease has been confirmed are known as infected premises (IPs); birds that have been exposed to infection through contact with the infected premises are known as dangerous contacts (DCs).

- All poultry on IPs will be culled. DCs will be identified. Where the risk of exposure to virus is high, the poultry will be culled and laboratory samples taken. Where the risk of exposure is assessed as not high, restrictions on the premises will be in place for 21 days and regular veterinary visits undertaken.
- Movement restrictions will apply to the IP or high risk DC until all birds have been culled, and a veterinary inspector is satisfied that cleaning and disinfection has been completed.
- Restrictions are applied and lifted by serving the occupier of the premises with notices, which explain the restrictions imposed and any licensing provisions.

Area Controls

3.3. The Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 (<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>) gives inspectors powers on suspicion of disease to impose movement controls on the suspected premises. However, once disease has been confirmed, area controls and restrictions are imposed by a Declaratory Order.

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3.4. A Diseases of Poultry Declaratory Order can be made in respect of the area surrounding an IP. A Declaratory Order provides for the division of the Infected Area into protection and surveillance zones, the PZ being a minimum radius of three kilometres from the IP, and contained in a surveillance zone based on a minimum radius of ten kilometres from the IP. The Declaratory Order applies the provisions of Schedule 2 of the Diseases of Poultry Order to the infected area unless they are varied or excepted by the Declaratory Order.

3.5. The requirements of Schedule 2 are:

Protection Zones

- For at least 21 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the IP required by paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 to the 2003 Order and thereafter until the Secretary of State declares the PZ to have become part of the surveillance zone, the occupier of premises containing poultry shall ensure that –
 - any inspector who requires information as to the presence of poultry on those premises is supplied with such information as soon as practicable;
 - any veterinary inspector who visits the premises to examine the poultry and take samples is given all necessary assistance and information;
 - the poultry are kept in their living quarters or such other place where they can be isolated;
 - there is an appropriate means of disinfection at the entrance and exits of the premises;
 - poultry and hatching eggs are not moved from the premises except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector:
 - for the purpose of transport for immediate slaughter to a designated slaughterhouse, or
 - in the case of day old chicks or ready-to-lay pullets, to premises within the surveillance zone on which there are no other poultry, or
 - in the case of hatching eggs to a designated hatchery, subject to the eggs and their packing being disinfected before dispatch; and used litter and poultry manure are not removed or spread.
- The Order provides that no person shall –
 - move any poultry, eggs or carcasses within the zone, except that poultry may be transported without stopping through the zone on a major highway or railway.
 - hold any fair, market, show or other gathering of poultry or other birds.

Surveillance Zones

- The following restrictions apply within the SZ and I continue to apply for a period of at least 30 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the infected premises required by paragraph 11 of Schedule 1 to the 2003 Order and thereafter until the Secretary of State declares the restrictions to be lifted.
- The occupier of premises must ensure that –
 - any inspector who requires information as to presence of poultry on those premises is supplied with such information as soon as practicable;
 - poultry are not moved from the premises out of the zone except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector for the purpose of transport direct to a designated slaughterhouse outside the SZ;
 - hatching eggs are not moved from the premises out of the zone except under a licence issued by a veterinary inspector for the purpose of transport direct to a designated hatchery and subject to the eggs and their packing being disinfected before dispatch; and
 - used litter and poultry manure are not moved out of the zone.
- The Order provides that no person shall –
 - move any poultry or hatching eggs into or within the zone except that poultry may be transported without stopping through the zone on a major highway or railway.
 - hold any fair, market, show or other gathering of poultry or other birds.
- The owner of any vehicle used to convey poultry, poultry carcasses, poultry offal, poultry feathers or eggs originating in an infected area, before it is so used, as soon as practicable after each time it is so used and in any event before it is so used again, must effectively clean and disinfect it.

Future Developments

3.6. Following the adoption of the new avian influenza Directive, we expect the Commission to review and update the Newcastle disease Directive along the same lines. If Ministers so decide, we may decide to pre-empt this change. New legislation is likely to provide for:

- a Temporary Control Zone (TCZ) with local area movement restrictions on suspicion of disease on a premises.
- a Restricted Zone (RZ) with movement restrictions covering part, or all of, England .

- the ability to derogate from some measures as long as disease control is not threatened.
- Closure of footpaths in the Protection Zone

3.8 Additional strategies could include

- A cull of flocks in the immediate area (1km, 3km or possibly larger if necessary, to prevent the spread of disease)
- If new legislation is not made, increasing the size of the infected area.

3.9 There is a Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol for use in the event of a pre-emptive (or firebreak) cull at Volume 3: ND, Annex A.

3.10 This protocol sets out the requirements that must be followed if a pre-emptive cull is to be undertaken.

Vaccination in the Event of an Outbreak of ND

3.7. There is provision in the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 for the imposition of a compulsory vaccination zone. There is vaccine available with a marketing authorisation in England and is freely available for use.

Vaccination Area

3.8. Vaccination will be considered as a control measure in an outbreak of NDV. The decision to implement compulsory vaccination will depend on factors such as the density of poultry farms in the area.

Vaccination as a Control Measure

3.9. There are two types of ND vaccine available: inactivated vaccines, in which the viral component is killed, and live vaccines. Live vaccines can be delivered through spray, aerosolisation, drinking water or direct inoculation. This means that they can be delivered to a large number of birds relatively quickly and effectively. Inactivated vaccines may only be delivered by direct inoculation, which would be impractical on a large scale.

3.10. Current vaccines protect birds against clinical disease caused by NDV, but do not protect against infection. Infected vaccinated birds will excrete the virus, but in relatively small amount, and will remain apparently healthy.

Additional Controls

- Export health certificates for live poultry and hatching eggs will be withdrawn. Consignments of live birds, day old chicks and if possible poultry meat exported during the risk period would be identified and authorities in the importing country notified.

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- Disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration would be implemented immediately

Further Action

3.11. Once Newcastle disease is confirmed, the main elements of this plan are brought into action. In particular:

- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 outlines emergency preparedness & mobilisation
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 4 describes outbreak management
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 5 sets out the main elements of the Communications Plan;
- Part 1: Generic Plan, Section 6 describes the strategic, tactical and operational organisations and structures.

3.12. These last two sections are augmented by the SVS instructions and the local office contingency plans.

SECTION 4. Outbreak Management – ND

1.[d8]

Health and Safety and Staff Welfare

4.1. All staff in contact with diseased birds must follow the precautions detailed in the relevant risk assessment and are required to use personal protective equipment.

4.2. Information and guidance for anyone who may be involved in working with poultry that may be affected with ND may be found at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/HSforal.pdf>

4.3. Non Defra personnel should also seek health and safety guidance from their employer or the HPA.

Biosecurity Guidance

4.4. Anyone coming into contact with poultry or their manure/litter runs the risk of spreading animal diseases. Biosecurity is the prevention of disease causing agents entering or leaving a livestock premises. It involves a number of measures and protocols designed to prevent potential disease causing agents being spread from one premises to another.

4.5. Guidance has been produced for all those who go onto farms. It applies to everyone who enters a farm or premises with farm animals or enters land used for grazing or keeping farm animals. It applies to all animal diseases covered and includes poultry. It deals with the precautions to be taken when entering or leaving any premises with farm animals in the absence of an outbreak of animal disease, after confirmation of an outbreak of an animal disease, and to premises under specific animal disease restrictions. All personnel implementing this contingency plan in the field must follow this guidance. It is at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/biosecurity_guidance.pdf

4.6. Poultry owners, (particularly those with backyard flocks), game and wild bird keepers should keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents and other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores. Owners are encouraged to have an active rodent and pest control system in place, and should be vigilant for evidence of vermin and monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping.

4.7. Further advice for poultry keepers is at Volume 3: ND, Annex B and may be found on the Defra website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/pdf/poultrybiosec.pdf>

4.8. This advice, and the health and safety guidance set out in this Plan, will be reissued and brought to all poultry keepers' attention in the event of an outbreak of ND. Defra Animal Disease Control Division will provide access to use existing poultry sector databases to mail the guidance and Press Releases. Any established networks that have been developed by Defra EDPC division with respect to Farm Health Planning Initiatives (under the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy) will be used as an additional communication channel with industry, veterinary bodies and other bodies to alert poultry keepers to available best practice advice.

Animal Welfare

General Welfare Responsibilities

4.9. There is a responsibility on all involved with the keeping of poultry to anticipate problems and to take steps to mitigate the effects. Guidance would be issued by Defra to poultry keepers in advance of, or in the early stages, of movement restrictions being put in place. If welfare problems arise which cannot be alleviated by management or husbandry practices, poultry keepers will be given the opportunity to move their birds under licence. Such movements may include movement to slaughter for the food chain or to more suitable land or buildings. For example, broilers and spent hens in infected areas may be permitted to move to slaughter. In circumstances where healthy birds are unable to be moved off farm, and welfare problems are likely to result, a welfare disposal scheme may operate.

4.10. In order to reduce the risk of exposure it may be necessary to house poultry. Free-range producers should ensure that adequate contingency arrangements are in place for providing for the welfare of free-range birds when they need to be kept housed.

4.11. In these circumstances a welfare disposal scheme could be introduced, following a declaration by a veterinary surgeon that the birds in question are suffering (or will suffer in the near future) welfare problems, which are directly attributable to the movement restrictions. Defra will arrange the killing and disposal of birds. The killing will take place on farms, not in slaughterhouses.

4.12. There would be no payment for birds slaughtered under a disposal scheme. This is in line with current Government policy.

4.13. The Head of Livestock Strategy Division, in consultation with the Heads of Animal Welfare Division, Animal Welfare Veterinary Division and EDPC Division will draw up a contingency plan for such measures and will consult stakeholders on it.

4.14. The following poultry enterprises maybe at greatest risk of welfare problems if disease control measures are introduced:

Point of Lay Birds

4.15. Point of lay birds will need to be moved from rearer to laying accommodation. If laying accommodation can be found within the same movement restriction zone then welfare issues will not arise. However if there is no laying accommodation available within the zone, and movement of birds cannot be licensed to any other suitable premises these birds may present a welfare issue.

Broilers

4.16. Broilers, hens and other poultry in Protection and Surveillance zones and under restrictions may also need to enter welfare disposal scheme when they cannot move to slaughter houses and instigation of on farm contingency plans do not adequately prevent welfare problems from developing.

Hatcheries

4.17. Hatcheries produce day old chicks, which are then delivered to rearing units. Current legislation only allows the hatcheries to deliver day old chicks to rearing units only if they are located in the same infected area. However it is not felt that a welfare disposal scheme would be required for this category of bird because hatcheries on the whole will be aware that there is no capacity on rearing farms and can destroy the chicks with the eggs humanely at the hatchery.

Operational Procedures

Vaccination

4.18. There are two types of ND vaccine available: inactivated vaccines, in which the viral component is killed, and live vaccines. Live vaccines can be delivered through spray, aerosolisation, drinking water or direct inoculation. This means that they can be delivered to a large number of birds relatively quickly and effectively. Inactivated vaccines may only be delivered by direct inoculation, which would be impractical on a large scale.

4.19. Current vaccines protect birds against clinical disease caused by NDV, but do not protect against infection. Infected vaccinated birds will excrete the virus, but in relatively small amount, and will remain apparently healthy

Initial Investigation

4.20. For details on operational procedures to be followed at the initial investigation stage refer to Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3.

Valuation

4.21. Where appropriate poultry will be valued according to standard rate cards. This system is used for valuing poultry flocks being culled for salmonella control and the range of species and husbandry types for which cards are available has been extended in consultation with the industry. In addition specialist poultry valuers may be required for valuation of species not covered by the cards and for resolving disputes.

Compensation

4.22. Compensation is payable at 100% of the market value for birds that are not affected with disease at the time of slaughter. Compensation is not payable for diseased or dead birds. [As before – same as AI]

Slaughter

4.23. In the event of ND being identified the slaughter of poultry would be considered as a control measure in order to eliminate disease. Depending on the scale and nature of the outbreak vaccination will also be considered as a control measure. See Volume 3: ND, Section 3 and Annex A for details on Disease Control Strategy and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol.

Disposal

4.24. In an outbreak of ND the disposal of carcasses and other poultry products (e.g. eggs) by incineration would be implemented immediately. However, pyre burning will not be considered for the disposal of poultry. See Volume 1: Generic Plan, Section 3 for current disposal options.

Cleansing and Disinfection of Affected Premises

4.25. Preliminary cleansing and disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of Defra and will be undertaken and funded by Defra. Secondary disinfection of farm premises will remain the responsibility of the owner.

Surveillance Visits

The Protection Zone

4.26. On all poultry premises within the Protection Zone there will be regular clinical inspection and examination to look for evidence of ND. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area, samples will be collected from poultry on all premises in the PZ and submitted for laboratory examination.

The Surveillance Zone

4.27. When 21 days have passed since the last confirmed case in the infected area a statistically significant number of poultry premises will be

inspected for signs of disease and samples collected for submission to laboratories. Premises with waterfowl will be subject to targeted surveillance because clinical disease is not always apparent in infected waterfowl.

Wild Bird Population

4.28. If there is epidemiological evidence to suggest that wild birds may have a role in the local spread of the disease, this may be investigated further if practical. The investigation may involve collection of dead wild birds for laboratory investigation.

IP/DC

4.29. When the cleansing and disinfection of infected premises has been completed satisfactory, the premises will remain under the restrictions for at least 21 days. After this, sentinel poultry can be introduced to the premises, under licence. Sentinel poultry are healthy birds that are susceptible to ND infection. The purpose of introducing sentinel birds is to detect the presence of any remaining ND virus. It is assumed that if virus remains birds will become infected and display signs of disease.

4.30. The health of the sentinel poultry will be monitored over the next 21 days to detect signs of disease. The restrictions on the premises will be lifted if the sentinel poultry remain free from disease caused by ND over the next 21 day period. If the owner decides not to use sentinel poultry, the premises will remain under restrictions for 56 days from the date that cleansing and disinfection had been completed to the satisfaction of a veterinary inspector.

Area Restrictions / Zones

4.31. PZ controls will apply for at least 21 days after the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of all associated infected premises, after which time the PZ becomes part of the SZ. The SZ will remain in place until a minimum period of 30 days has passed from the completion of the preliminary cleansing and disinfection of the last IP.

Lifting of Restrictions on the Premises

4.32. The infected area will be lifted after all surveillance visits and laboratory tests have been reported as negative, indicating that no ND virus remains.

Serology

Surveillance

4.33. Serological surveillance may be carried out for a number of reasons, including epidemiology and declaring surveillance and protection zones to be free from disease. Serological surveillance in support of lifting restrictions

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should not commence until at least 21 days following preliminary cleansing and disinfection of an infected premises.

Diagnostic Testing

4.34. The Veterinary Laboratories Agency at Weybridge provides the diagnostic testing service for ND.

4.35. Personnel required to undertake blood sampling will be recruited and trained under the co-ordination of the Human Resources Services Division. Personnel could be drawn from veterinary/agricultural students and from local Job Centres.

Expert Group

4.36. A permanently operational expert group comprising of epidemiologists, veterinary scientists and virologists, has been established to maintain an expertise in order to assist the competent authority in ensuring preparedness against an outbreak of ND.

4.37. In the event of an outbreak of Newcastle disease, the ND Expert Group will be convened and its membership expanded to cover diseases of poultry and will be chaired by the CVO/DCVO.

4.38. The expert group will be a strategic/tactical level group of specialists whose role will be to provide advice to senior management on surveillance programmes, analyse information and advise on control strategies. They will report to the CVO and the NDCC.

National Emergencies Epidemiology Group

4.39. Sufficient training has been undertaken to provide enough trained personnel to mount several epidemiology groups in the event of an outbreak of ND. The intention is to have at least two veterinarians trained in epidemiology in each Region.

4.40. In the event of an outbreak, the group(s) will be alerted by the NDCC and mobilised in the field as soon as the disease is confirmed. The primary task of the team is to provide the National and Local Disease Control Centres with a report, which meets with relevant Commission guidelines. The team will also advise on sanitation and carcase disposal.

Detection of Notifiable Disease in Avian Quarantine

Authorised Under Commission Decision 2000/666

Quarantine is designed to contain disease so a quarantine incident does not constitute a disease outbreak unless and until there is evidence that disease has escaped.

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Clinical or laboratory evidence of disease will be reported to Defra. The [CVO or DCVO] will be alerted and an urgent telephone conference will then be convened as soon as sufficient facts have been established.

On receipt of a positive or strongly suspicious laboratory result or clinical report, the [CVO or DCVO] will convene an urgent meeting of the NEEG to interpret the initial veterinary inquiry findings for ADPG. ADPG will then decide what action is appropriate with the devolved CVO taking a lead role if applicable. The SVS routinely collates key information on quarantine in order to support this process.

Strategic level decisions should not be required. Operational level decisions will be made by the local DVM. The AHDO should be able to provide sufficient resources to deal with a single incident.

Communications will follow the 'amber' model in the generic contingency plan as appropriate to the nature of the incident.

Public health risks will be managed in accordance with guidance provided in section 1.

Further detail is provided in Viper Chapter 21C.

NEWCASTLE DISEASE ANNEXES

Newcastle Disease: Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol – ND ANNEX A

1. The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 1734) came into force on 11 July 2003. It extends to avian influenza and Newcastle disease certain measures introduced by the Animal Health Act 2002, including the power to slaughter animals to prevent the spread of disease (a preventive or firebreak cull). The use of this power is circumscribed by legislation. In particular there is a need to have a disease control (slaughter) protocol and this requirement was introduced by The Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease (Biosecurity Guidance and Disease Control (Slaughter) Protocol) (England and Wales) Order 2003 (Statutory Instrument 2003 No 2035). The power cannot be used unless the protocol has been published and vaccination has first been considered to prevent the spread of disease (Section 32D(2) of the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended). The purpose of this disease control (slaughter) protocol is to identify criteria to be considered and procedures to be followed should it be considered necessary to call on this new slaughter power.

2. The definition of 'poultry' in the Animal Health Act 1981 as amended has been extended to include all birds (Article 2 of the Diseases of Poultry (England) Order 2003 and the Diseases of Poultry (Wales) Order 2003).

Purpose for Which the Power Would Be Used

3. This power would be used only where this is justified by the circumstances of the possibility of disease spreading and on the basis of sound veterinary, epidemiological and scientific advice.

The Principal Factors to be Taken into Account

4. A major factor will be to get ahead of the disease. A particular example would be to protect areas of dense poultry population. The slaughter would include those flocks (and, if necessary, other birds) which, should they become infected, would present a significant risk to the farming and poultry community more generally by contributing to onward spread. It is in such circumstances that effective preventative action may be necessary to safeguard the wider public interest. Species, geographical area and, if appropriate, type of farming would be relevant. Any decision to use the wider powers of slaughter would be taken in the light of an overall assessment of the risks, costs and benefits in a given situation. This could include not only risks of transmission but also the potential social and economic costs that would arise if effective and timely action were not taken.

The procedure to be followed in reaching a decision

5. The steps to be taken comprise of:

- (a) the identification of the poultry that are likely to contribute to spread of disease, based on epidemiological assessment, veterinary advice and local factors;
- (b) the determination of which species are involved;
- (c) consideration of exemptions on the basis of husbandry or other criteria, for example, rare breeds or genetic value;
- (d) consideration of exemptions for hatcheries;
- (e) the determination of the geographical area involved;
- (f) the determination of the rules for inclusion or exclusion of poultry at the boundary of that area;
- (g) analysis of risks, costs and benefits;
- (h) the publication of an outline of the reasons why such a slaughter is needed.

The procedure by which poultry on a premises will be deemed to be included in a slaughter

6. Premises believed to contain poultry to be slaughtered to prevent the spread of disease would be identified. A Veterinary Inspector would visit and ascertain if poultry meet the criteria for inclusion in the preventive cull.

7. The Veterinary Inspector would be required to explain the reasons to the owner and give him an opportunity to provide evidence if he believed the poultry should be exempted. A slaughter notice would be issued that states the powers under which slaughter is required and the reason why the owner's stock is included (with reference to the criteria for slaughter to prevent the spread of disease).

The means by which a particular decision to slaughter can be reviewed

8. Both as part of the slaughter notice and during explanations the owner must be made aware that they can ask the DVM to review the decision that their stock meets the criteria for the preventive slaughter and be advised how and by when this can be done.

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9. The DVM, or deputy, must be available to hear such reviews. The following action would be taken:

- they will consider the views of the owner as to why they believe the decision is wrong.
- they must ensure that the veterinary inspector has carried out a full and fair inquiry to establish if the poultry meet the appropriate criteria.

Biosecurity Poultry Guidance – ND ANNEX B

Better Biosecurity Provides:

Peace of Mind, A Healthier Flock and a More Viable Business

All Poultry keepers need to be aware of the need for strict biosecurity and hygiene on their premises:

Benefits:

- HELPS KEEP OUT exotic diseases such as Newcastle disease and avian influenza
- REDUCES THE RISK of zoonotic diseases such as salmonella becoming established
- LIMITS SPREAD of diseases and HELPS TO PROTECT your neighbours, public health and the countryside
- IMPROVES overall flock health
- CUTS COSTS of disease treatment
- REDUCES LOSSES and could improve farm profitability

How Disease Spreads:

- Movement of poultry, people, vehicles and equipment between and within farms
- Introduction of birds of low or unknown health status
- Contact with neighbours' flocks
- Using shared farm equipment and vehicles which have not been effectively cleansed and disinfected
- Contact with vermin and wild birds
- Birds drinking from contaminated water sources
- Birds eating contaminated feed
- Unsatisfactory cleaning and disinfection of vehicles, sheds, feeding troughs and other equipment

Important!

1. Make a flock health plan with your vet that includes the basic biosecurity measures in this guidance to reduce the risk disease spreading. Plans should include isolation for new stock and sampling procedures for certain diseases
2. Ensure that all records are accurate and up to date to allow traceability of produce through the food chain
3. Train your staff – ensure they understand that biosecurity and strict hygiene is important

How to Stop Disease – Keep Your Farm Clean!

- Don't bring infection onto your farm, or spread it around your farm, on your clothes, footwear or hands. Clean overalls and footwear must be worn when entering poultry farms. Protective clothing and footwear should be removed and either cleansed and disinfected, laundered or disposed of after use.
- Strictly limit and control access to poultry flocks. If possible the site should be fenced with a controlled entry point. Visitors and their vehicles should be limited and as far as possible kept away from poultry buildings and pastures
- Have pressure washers, brushes, hoses, water and an approved disinfectant available. Make sure they are used by visitors to clean vehicles, equipment and boots
- Keep farm access routes, parking areas, yards, areas around buildings and storage areas clean and tidy and well maintained. This helps avoid wild birds and animals being attracted onto the site and entering buildings and stores
- Wild birds can carry poultry diseases. Minimise contact between poultry and wild birds. Prevent accumulation of standing water and remove spilled feed that could attract wild birds. Maintain buildings to ensure that wild birds do not nest or roost in them
- Keep wild birds, dogs, cats, rodents or other livestock out of poultry buildings and feed stores

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- Have an active rodent and pest control system in place. Be vigilant for evidence of vermin. Monitor vermin activity by baiting and trapping
- Supply only clean fresh drinking water to birds. Water lines and drinkers must be flushed through and cleaned regularly. In the case of free-range birds restrict access to possible sources of standing water used by wild birds
- Feed bins, hoppers and feeding equipment must be cleaned and maintained regularly. Feed silos and containers must be sealed to prevent animals and wild birds contaminating feed
- Feed should only be obtained from a mill or supplier that operates in accordance with relevant Defra and UKASTA Codes of Practice who will make available results of salmonella tests on request
- Damaged eggs, dead birds, litter and manure may carry disease. Dispose of them promptly and properly
- Clean and disinfect all vehicles after each journey. If possible, do not use the same vehicles for transporting birds, feed, manure or other wastes
- Regularly clean and disinfect all crates, containers and other equipment before and after use. Do not move any equipment into different poultry buildings without cleaning and disinfecting it first. This also applies to injecting, medicating or treating birds.
- At depopulation at the end of a cycle, thoroughly clean the building and all equipment, including ducting, drains and fans. Remove all surplus feed, dead birds and litter. Disinfect the premises and all equipment and carry out rodent and other pest control. Cleaning equipment and protective clothing should also be cleaned and disinfected

Buying New Stock -

Always know the health status of birds you are buying or moving!

- Incoming stock should be kept properly isolated from the rest of the flock - discuss with your vet and agree a testing and monitoring programme
- Only place new stock in facilities which you know have been cleaned and disinfected
- Use separate equipment and staff or handle isolated stock last. Never re-enter your main flock buildings after dealing with isolated stock until you have washed and changed into cleaned overalls and boots
- Keep isolation buildings as near as possible to the farm entrance and as separate from other poultry buildings. Ensure buildings are in good repair and effectively prevent vermin from getting in and spreading any diseases

Be Vigilant!

- Look out for signs of disease in your flock
- Increased mortality, falling egg production and signs of respiratory problems may be early indicators of a disease problem
- If you suspect disease, ask your vet for advice as soon as possible. Do not wait for more evidence - some diseases can spread very quickly!