

# International Standards for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Risk Mitigation

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# Overview

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- Defining the Challenge
- Evolution of OIE Standards
- Unfortunate Truths
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- OIE Opportunities
- Emergency Management 101

# The Relevance of OIE Standards

The World Organisation for Animal Health has been the recognized intergovernmental standard setting organization for animal and zoonotic disease control since its inception in 1924 as the Office International des Epizooties (OIE)

- Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement entered into in force in 1995
- Gave legal weight to the intergovernmental standards developed by the *Three Sisters*
- OIE is not an enforcement body
- Provides support to the WTO dispute process
- Offers mediation to Members





# The Relevance of OIE Standards

- Science based standards developed with inputs from experts drawn from the network of 296 International Reference Laboratories, comments from 180 Member Countries and 67 International Organizations with whom the OIE has cooperative agreements
- Standards apply to:
  - Disease reporting obligations
  - Disease control methods including animal welfare considerations
  - Safe international movement of animals and animal products
  - Diagnostic methods
  - Vaccines and vaccine production
  - Quality of Veterinary Services



# Defining the Challenge

- Current global distribution of new and emerging pathogens is unprecedented
- Precipitating factors are complex, interdependent and well entrenched:
  - Epidemiological globalisation
  - International commerce and extended supply chains
  - Climate change
  - Animal production and husbandry practices
  - Population demographics
  - Land use and displacement



# Evolution of Standards and Approaches

- The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code has been progressively revised to recognize the global risk reality and to mitigate unintended and unwarranted consequences of disease occurrences
- Over the past fifteen years, moved from historic paradigm of country freedom to zoning to compartmentalisation to commodity specific risk management
- Adoption phase has been completed
- Consistent implementation and behaviour change on the part of all countries remains a work in progress

# Evolution of Standards and Approaches

- The desired outcome is informed public policy dialogue and decision making that fully considers:



# Unfortunate Truths

- Disease reporting has consequences but these can be mitigated if you lead by example
- As an exporting country, never allow an importing country to be sentinel to an undetected or unreported disease event in your country
- Crises invariably demonstrate biosecurity breaches and educational moments that should be addressed and practiced in peace time
- It is always better to learn a lesson only once
- Zoning, compartmentalization and commodity based risk acceptance require demonstration of public and private sector partnership, competence and credibility of the Veterinary Authority and a commitment to surveillance, traceability and bio-security



# Unfortunate Truths

- The acceptance of zoning and compartmentalisation is founded on clear and consistent authorities for:
  - Establishment of quarantine and movement controls
  - Traceability
  - Disease control measures
  - Order of destruction of animals and associated risk materials
  - Cleaning and disinfection
  - Animal Welfare
  - Shipping of diagnostic specimens
  - Quality of vaccines and veterinary medical products
  - Veterinary Statutory Bodies



# Unfortunate Truths

- Acceptance of zoning and compartmentalisation also requires
  - Clarity of jurisdictional mandate for the zone or compartment and their respective borders
  - Auditable documented protocols for biosecurity, surveillance and record keeping
  - Demonstration of diagnostic proficiency

# Unfortunate Truths

- The perfect biological storm was forecasted by Dr. Lonnie King almost fifteen years ago
- Effective bio-security requires recognition of the true interdependence of the agricultural sectors and an inclusive, integrated risk management approach
- Vaccination should be considered primarily for limiting spread when control is not achievable but not as the primary means of prevention. It will have additional significant trade impacts and must have an exit strategy
- Need to focus on resilience as well as response



# Failure is Not an Option

- Impacts of disease events must be recognized at many levels
- Political
  - Poor risk communication
  - Failure to meet public expectations concerning protection of health, economic interests, protection of environment, food security
  - Perception of incompetence or lack of preparedness
  - Absence of clear responsibility, mandate or jurisdictional authority



# Failure is Not an Option

- Economic
  - Loss of export markets
  - Domestic consumer confidence
  - Productivity
  - Tourism
  - Fiscal prudence



# Failure is Not an Option

- Environmental
  - Disposal challenge
  - Loss of genetic and biological diversity
- Social
  - Direct health consequences associated with zoonotic diseases
  - Potential nutritional impacts due to disruption in food availability and affordability
  - Significant physical, emotional and psychological trauma to affected producers and families

# Private Sector Opportunities

- Early detection and mandatory reporting of changes in production, behaviour and status
- Site specific bio-security protocols with regular independent evaluations/validations (possible pre-requisite for eligibility for compensation)
- Approved cleaning and disinfection protocols and animal disposal plans in place

# Private Sector Opportunities

- Remembering that zoonoses are a two way street and lead by example
  
- Occupational health and safety program
  - Personal protective equipment
  - Vaccination of personnel
  - Surveillance and monitoring program
  
- Proactive informing the public of industry standards and practices



# Private Sector Opportunities

- Creating the environment and momentum for constructive regulatory negotiations with trading partners
- Supporting disease research (genomics, immunity, vaccines and vaccine delivery systems)
- Contributing to the standard setting process at both the country and international level

# Private Sector Opportunities

- Educating policy makers of the critical contributions to global food security, nutrition and economic performance that merit protection and investment
  
- Development of truthful and synergistic communications with the animal health and public health sectors and third party spokespersons
  - What you know
  - What you don't know
  - What you are doing to address the latter in the public interest



# OIE Opportunities

- Adapt international standards based on new science or knowledge that may be derived
- Further refine commodity based risk parameters if bio-security can be demonstrated
- Consistently remind countries of their responsibilities post adoption of standards
- Advocate for recognition and rewarding of appropriate behaviours



# Emergency Management 101

- Success in managing disease outbreaks is dependent on addressing three elements simultaneously and equally well:
  - the biological event
  - the communications
  - the relationships
- OIE provides science based standards adopted and endorsed by 180 Member Countries to support the successful management of the biological event

# Thank you for your attention



**WORLD ORGANISATION FOR ANIMAL HEALTH**  
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