USA Comments – TAHSC February 2016 Report

CHAPTER 1.4.

ANIMAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE

[Article 1.4.1.]

[Article 1.4.2.]

[Article 1.4.3.]

[Article 1.4.4.]

[Article 1.4.5.]

Article 1.4.6.

Surveillance to demonstrate freedom from a disease, ~~or~~ infection or infestation

1. Requirements to declare a country or a zone free from disease ~~or~~ infection, or infestation ~~without pathogen specific surveillance~~

Rationale: For consistency with the paragraph immediately below. The scope of this subsection includes infestation. Thus, including infestation in this subsection title is appropriate. Also, the reason for excluding infestation from this subsection title and including it in the next sentence, in which the scope seems to be restated, is unclear. Thus its addition for consistency. Therefore, for consistency, throughout these Articles, the United States has added the words infection, infestation, pathogen and/or pest where appropriate.

This article provides general principles for declaring a country or a *zone* free from a *disease*, ~~or~~ *infection* or *infestation* in relation to the time of ~~last~~ most recent occurrence and in particular for the recognition of historical freedom.

Rationale: suggest change for added clarity

The provisions of this article are based on Article 1.4.3. and the following premises:

– in the absence of *disease* and *vaccination*, the animal population would become susceptible over a period of time;

– the disease agents to which these provisions apply are likely to produce identifiable clinical signs in susceptible *animals*;

Comment to highlighted text above: The reasons for including this scope limitation is unclear. Surveillance programs should take into account the possibility of infection in the absence of clinical signs.

– competent and effective *Veterinary Services* will be able to investigate, diagnose and report *disease*, if present;

– *the disease*, ~~or~~ *infection* or *infestation* can affect both domestic *animals* and *wildlife*;

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– the absence of the *disease*, ~~or~~ *infection* or *infestation* over a long period of time in a susceptible population can be substantiated by effective ~~disease~~ investigation and reporting by a Member Country.

Rationale: Recommend deleting the word "disease" in the context of this sentence: Investigation of *disease* would not necessarily substantiate the absence of infection or infestation in cases in which infection or infestation does not produce disease.

a) Historical~~ly~~ freedom

Unless otherwise specified in the relevant *disease*, *infection or infestation*-specific chapter, a country or *zone* may be recognised as free ~~from *infection*~~ without formally applying a pathogen-specific *surveillance* programme when:

i) there has never been occurrence of *disease*, *infection or infestation* or

ii) eradication has been achieved or the pathogen or pest ~~*disease* or *infection*~~ has ~~ceased to~~ not occurred for at least 25 years, provided that for at least the past 10 years:

~~iii)~~ – the *disease*, *infection or infestation* has been ~~a~~ *notifiable* ~~*disease*;~~

~~iv)~~ – an early detection system has been in place for all relevant species;

~~v)~~ – measures to prevent the introduction of the *disease*, *infection or infestation* ~~or *infection* introduction~~ have been in place; no *vaccination* against the *disease* *or infection* has been carried out unless otherwise provided for in the *Terrestrial Code*;

~~vi)~~ – the *infection* or *infestation* is not known to be established in *wildlife* within the country or *zone*. A country or *zone* cannot apply for historical freedom if there is any evidence of *infection* or *infestation* in *wildlife*.

b) ~~Last~~ Most recent occurrence within the previous 25 years

Countries or *zones* that have achieved eradication (or in which the *disease* or *infection* has ~~ceased to~~ not occurred) within the previous 25 years, should follow the pathogen or pest-specific *surveillance* requirements in the *Terrestrial Code* if they exist. In the absence of specific requirements, countries should follow the general recommendations on *surveillance* outlined in this chapter provided that for at least the past 10 years:

i) the *disease*, *infection or infestation* has been ~~a~~ *notifiable* ~~*disease*~~;

ii) an early detection system has been in place for all relevant species;

Rationale: The added text is for clarity and relevancy

iii) measures to prevent the introduction of the *disease*, *infection or infestation* ~~or *infection* introduction~~ have been in place;

iv) no *vaccination* against the *disease* *or infection* has been carried out unless otherwise provided for in the *Terrestrial Code*;

v) the *infection* or *infestation* is not known to be established in *wildlife* within the country or *zone*. A country or *zone* cannot apply for recognition of freedom if there is any evidence of *infection* or *infestation* in *wildlife*.

2. Recommendations for the discontinuation of pathogen or pest -specific screening after recognition of freedom from infection or infestation

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A country~~,~~ or *zone* ~~or *compartment*~~ that has been recognised as free ~~from *infection*~~ following the provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* may discontinue pathogen-specific screening while maintaining the ~~infection-~~free status provided that:

a) the *disease*, *infection or infestation* is ~~a~~ *notifiable* ~~*disease*;~~

b) an *early detection system* is in place for all relevant species;

Rationale: The added text is for clarity and relevancy

c) ~~the~~ measures to prevent the introduction of the *disease,* ~~or~~ *infection* *or infestation* are in place;

d) *vaccination* against the *disease* *or infection* is not applied;

e) the *infection* or *infestation* is known not to be established in *wildlife*. It can be difficult to collect sufficient epidemiological data to prove absence of *disease*, ~~or~~ *infection* *or infestation* in *wild animal* populations. In such circumstances, a range of supporting evidence should be used to make this assessment.

3. Self-declaration of freedom ~~from disease or infection~~

A Member Country may make a self-declaration in accordance with Chapter 1.6. that its entire territory, a *zone* or a *compartment* is free from a *listed disease*, *infection* or *infestation*, based on the implementation of the provisions of the *Terrestrial Code* and the *Terrestrial Manual*. When ~~The~~ the *Veterinary Authority* ~~may wish to~~ transmits this information to ~~OIE~~ the *Headquarters* in accordance with Article 1.1.5., ~~which~~ the *Headquarters* may publish the information.

4. International recognition of ~~disease or infection~~ free status

For *diseases* *and infections* for which procedures exist whereby the OIE can officially recognise the existence of a *disease* or *infection* free country or *zone*, a Member Country wishing to apply for recognition of this status should, via its Permanent Delegate, send to the OIE all the relevant documentation relating to the country or *zone* concerned. Such documentation should be presented in accordance with the recommendations prescribed by the OIE for the appropriate animal *diseases* *and infections*.

5. Demonstration of freedom ~~from infection~~

A *surveillance* system to demonstrate freedom from *disease*, *infection* or *infestation* should meet the following requirements in addition to the general requirements outlined in Article 1.4.3.

Freedom ~~from *infection*~~ implies the absence of the pathogen~~ic agent~~ or pest in the country, *zone* or *compartment*. Scientific methods cannot provide absolute certainty of ~~the~~ this absence ~~of *infection*~~. Therefore, demonstrating freedom ~~from *infection*~~ involves providing sufficient evidence to demonstrate (to a level of confidence acceptable to Member Countries) that *infection* or *infestation* with a specified pathogen or pest, if present, is present in less than a specified proportion of the population.

However, finding evidence of *infection* or *infestation* at any prevalence in the target population automatically invalidates any freedom ~~from *infection*~~ claim unless otherwise stated in the relevant *disease*, *infection or infestation*-specific chapter. The implications for the status of domestic *animals* of *disease*, ~~or~~ *infection* or *infestation* present in *wildlife* in the same country or *zone* should be assessed in each situation, as indicated in the relevant *disease* *infection or infestation*-specific chapter ~~on each *disease*~~ in the *Terrestrial Code*.

Evidence from targeted, random or non-random data sources, as stated before, may increase the level of confidence or be able to detect a lower level of prevalence with the same level of confidence compared to structured surveys.

[Article 1.4.7.]

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