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14 June 2000

## **ANIMAL QUARANTINE POLICY MEMORANDUM      2000/30**

### **A SCIENTIFIC REVIEW OF LEPTOSPIROSIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR QUARANTINE POLICY**

#### **DRAFT REPORT**

This Animal Quarantine Policy Memorandum (AQPM) advises the release of, and seeks public comment on, a draft report of a review of scientific information on leptospirosis with reference to practical questions associated with existing trade. A precis of the draft report is attached. Comments by 15 August 2000 would be appreciated.

#### **Background**

Leptospirosis, an OIE List B disease, is a contagious and complex disease of animals and humans occurring world-wide. Of the known 230 serovars, only 22 have been identified in Australia. Australia's quarantine restrictions for leptospirosis are currently confined to the requirement that dogs give a negative result to an antibody test for *Leptospira interrogans* serovar canicola. This serovar is considered exotic to Australia despite it having been isolated from a human in Australia.

In contrast, many of Australia's trading partners, including New Zealand, have quarantine requirements for most livestock species, dogs, cats, and their genetic material. Many require livestock to have parenteral injection of streptomycin/ dihydrostreptomycin before export.

Streptomycin/dihydrostreptomycin (S/DHS) is usually the drug of choice for treating leptospirosis in animals. Many countries are reviewing the use of this antibiotic. Recently, Australia has withdrawn approval for the use of streptomycin in food producing animals because of a lack of residue data to set a withholding period. However, it is available under a permit system to allow compliance with export protocols and to treat clinical leptospirosis. Exporters are experiencing difficulties in obtaining supplies of S/DHS and hence in meeting the import requirements of some of Australia's trading partners.

The review assesses scientific information on leptospirosis with reference to practical issues associated with existing trade; contains an assessment of the risks of importing leptospirosis with animals and animal products; proposes appropriate risk management; and provides technical information which will help Australia negotiate changes to leptospirosis health requirements with its trading partners.

The findings, which are based on a comprehensive analysis of relevant scientific literature and discussions with experts, involve no new significant technical issues and require no new substantial risk analysis. The scientific information in the review is comprehensive and current, and independent scientific reviewers have agreed the analysis is accurate, objective and balanced. AQIS invites comment on the draft report.

A precis of the review, which outlines the background, aim, scope and results, is attached. The draft entitled “*A scientific review of leptospirosis and implications for quarantine policy – Draft Report*” may be obtained from the AQIS contact officer (details below), or downloaded from the AQIS website: <http://www.aqis.gov.au>. Files may be downloaded in either Microsoft® Word 97 or Adobe® PDF format.

### **Next Steps**

If you wish to comment on the report, your response should be provided to AQIS by 15 August 2000. AQIS will take account of stakeholder comment in finalising the review.

I would be grateful if you would pass details of this notice to other interested parties, who should advise AQIS if they wish to be included in future communications on this matter. Enquiries should be directed to the officer whose contact details appear below.

### **Confidentiality**

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1982*, all submissions received in response to Animal Quarantine Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the Memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission, the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked ‘confidential’ and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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