



Department of
**AGRICULTURE
FISHERIES &
FORESTRY -
AUSTRALIA**



11 February 2002

ANIMAL BIOSECURITY POLICY MEMORANDUM 2002/04

TECHNICAL BRIEF ON VHSV IN CALIFORNIAN PILCHARDS AND MACKEREL

This Animal Biosecurity Policy Memorandum (ABPM) provides stakeholders with a technical brief (attached) summarising the scientific information surrounding the recent identification of viral haemorrhagic septicaemia virus (VHSV) in Californian pilchards (*Sardinops sagax*) and mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*). The brief is intended to aid discussions at the public meeting to be held in Adelaide on 20 February 2002. Comments on the brief would be appreciated prior to the public meeting but will be accepted up until 25 February 2002.

Biosecurity Australia is reviewing existing biosecurity policies for the importation of bait/feed fish into Australia following the recent identification of VHSV in pilchards and mackerel from Californian waters, as notified to stakeholders in ABPMs 2001/36 of 11 December 2001 and 2002/01 of 30 January 2002.

ABPM 2002/01 notified stakeholders of a public meeting to be held in Adelaide on 20 February 2002 to discuss the technical issues related to the review and to provide all interested parties with the opportunity to participate in the process. For information on the meeting please contact the officer whose details appear below.

In order to provide participants with an overview of the technical details relevant to discussions at the meeting, a brief on the available scientific information has been produced. This brief is attached and is also on the AFFA website (<http://www.affa.gov.au>). The brief provides an account of the taxonomy and characteristics of the VHS virus, geographic distribution and parameters of the disease.

As part of the review process, stakeholder comment on the content and scope of the brief would be appreciated by 18 February 2002 (ie before the public meeting) but will be accepted up until 25 February 2002.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to Animal Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available. Comments 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.

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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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