

IAAG

Independent Archive Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

REMIT OF THE IAAG

To provide *ad hoc* advice to the Defra TSE tissue archive to ensure any reduction of the collection is carried out in a rational, open and transparent manner in line with Defra's policy to maintain TSE capability and Reference Laboratory functions at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

MEMBERSHIP OF THE IAAG

The membership of the IAAG will be:

- Independent chairperson – with a scientific background to allow them to understand the issues, but no affiliation to an active TSE research group
- Up to 5 independent scientists, including the chairperson*
- Defra Science Officer
- Defra Policy Officer
- APHA TSE leads: lead scientist, lead pathologist, and workgroup leader
- APHA TSE archive manager
- FSA observer/representative

**to provide experience in science of TSEs, archiving and quality control.*

ROLE OF THE IAAG

The role of the IAAG will be to respond to *ad hoc* requests by the DEFRA TSE tissue archive to advise on the tissues to be removed following periodical rationalisation of content which aims to reduce the size of the collection.

When tissues will be removed and destroyed

1. Defra's key objective is to retain only the amount of TSE tissues that align with and help to deliver the minimum TSE capability at APHA.
2. There will be a number of factors to consider, such as the volume of requests for these tissues, their use as reference material to support quality assurance programmes issued by the TSE Reference Laboratory or commercially by APHA, and any other justification provided by the APHA TSE science leads that supports retention or discard in light of the key policy objective as stated in 1.
3. When a revision of the TSE archive content is needed the TSE archive group will do a first in-house screening of the collection in consultation with the TSE lead scientist and the TSE lead pathologist to make an initial agreement on the tissues to retain and those that could be discarded.
4. The IAAG will be presented with the results of the screening and provide further advice in order to reach a final agreement on the core collection to be retained and which tissues can be removed from the archive and destroyed.

Meeting frequency and quoracy

Ad hoc when requested by the TSE archive group to agree on any reduction of the archive content.

These meetings will consider and discuss the contents of the archive using summaries by historical project codes and anatomical tissue type/disease diagnosis, in light of the preliminary decisions made by the TSE lead scientist and TSE lead pathologist. Final sample sets for disposal will be agreed upon.

Meetings will be quorate when 4 of the independent scientist members are present, including the chairperson.

The group's recommendations will be based on consensus. Reaching consensus does not assume that everyone must be in complete agreement; consensus is not unanimity but the reaching of a decision to which the group consents in order for the group to act.

Meetings will be held remotely using a suitable videoconferencing platform.

Fees

Independent scientists can claim a fee for preparation and participation in IAAG meetings, as detailed below:

- Meeting attendance: hourly rate of £39 for members, £45 for chair.
- Meeting preparation: up to half of the meeting time, with a minimum of one hour.