



Note of the Animal Health Surveillance Governance Board (AHSGB) Meeting 8

Date	Thursday 16 th March 2017
Location	Room 307, Nobel House, London
Attendees	Chair: Paul Roger External members: Ian McGrath, Paul Burr, Nick Fenwick <i>Ex officio</i> members and Policy Customers: Richard Irvine, Gavin Watkins, Gordon Hickman, Nigel Gibbens (by phone), Graeme Cooke & Michael Seals Observer: Ingrid Kiss (APHA, on secondment to Defra). Secretariat: Jane Tennant
Apologies	None

Agenda

1. Welcome, Apologies & Conflicts of Interest Register
2. Review of Minutes, Action points and Recommendations from previous meeting
3. Annual Review of Terms of Reference
4. Attendance and feedback at meetings
5. Update on the GB Surveillance Framework, with current draft document
6. Arrangements for Update on the Review of the AHSGB
7. Surveillance Communications Update
8. Responses from Sector Groups to the AHSGB
9. Measures of Surveillance
10. Scanning Surveillance Development Programme Update
11. Dates & locations of next meetings
12. Any Other Business

Minutes

1	Welcome, apologies & Conflicts of Interest Register: All attendees
1.1	Introductions to Michael Seals and Graeme Cooke who joined the meeting. Graeme Cooke is the new Deputy CVO-UK and the GB policy lead for Surveillance.
1.2	The conflicts of interest register was reviewed and there were no changes.
2	Review of Minutes, Action points and Recommendations from 7-011216.
2.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and approved by the Board as a complete and accurate record of the meeting.
2.2	Discussion lead to consideration of how conversations between experts and private vets are captured, not just data, and Paul Roger asked how the Surveillance Intelligence Unit (SIU) are progressing with developments in the area of capturing conversations. Access to disease experts at APHA through a conversation system would enable discussions with private labs to access an informed network between vet, lab and species expert.

2.3	Richard Irvine explained that a conversations system is within the scope of the Scanning Surveillance Development Programme (SSDP) and is a project that SIU intend to set up with Defra IT. This also links to a 'ways of working' project for vets in the surveillance network, which includes Veterinary Investigation Officers (VIOs). Richard Irvine also explained that within the SSDP there is a tactical 'data orchestration' project which aims to bring different types of data from outside of APHA.
2.4	Paul Roger highlighted that the CHAWG report includes how the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) is aiming to gather data, and asked how the SIU are collaborating with AHDB. Collaboration is at two levels; a) Species Expert Groups (SEGs) liaise with the AHDB and with sector councils, and b) ongoing discussions with the sector council leads engaging on what is important for surveillance, and considering the differences between government surveillance activity and levy funded activity.
2.5	Richard Irvine highlighted work underway through the SEGs with AHDB, e.g. the syndromic surveillance pilot project with AHDB Pork.
2.6	Gavin Watkins explained that we are already moving into a time where more data is available, but of variable quality; the use and relevance of the data will vary in relation to surveillance and so regular consideration of which data to use must be given. Richard Irvine agreed and reminded that we must also consider the knowledge and expertise of people, and not just solely data.
2.7	Paul Roger highlighted the importance and need for data collection and data mining, which Richard Irvine explained was an aim of the surveillance development programme to take forward. At the moment there is a gap between changes in frontline services and the commensurate increase in data collection and analysis.
2.8	Paul Burr noted that APHA is aiming to encourage practitioners to contact their local Veterinary Investigation Centre, even if it is further away than it used to be; the publicity surrounding the available free disease expert consultancy must continue alongside publicity relating to the free-to-farmer carcass collection arrangements.

3	Annual Review of Terms of Reference
3.1	The Terms of Reference were agreed as correct and current.

4	Attendance and feedback at meetings
4.1	Paul Roger, Richard Irvine and Jane Tennant met with John Fishwick, Junior Vice President of the British Veterinary Association (BVA), and Paul Roger has since met with Kate Sharpe, the lead of the BVA surveillance working group. They will be attending the next surveillance working group meeting and will continue regular meetings with the BVA.
4.2	Paul Roger and Richard Irvine will be attending, and giving a presentation to, the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England at their meeting on 11/04/17.
4.3	Ian McGrath has regular contact with the National Farmers Union (NFU), and recently attended the Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group for Wales.

4.4	Nick Fenwick has been to a number of relevant meetings with key interests being Tuberculosis and Schmallenberg virus. The feeling within the farming industry appears to be more focused on endemic issues, e.g. management diseases such as mastitis, rather than surveillance for exotic and notifiable diseases.
4.5	Michael Seals asked if there are different approaches between the pig/poultry and sheep/cattle industries, which Ian McGrath confirmed; there are similarities between poultry and pig holdings, in comparison to cattle and sheep holdings. Michael Seals also highlighted that the veterinary roles within those industries are very different.
4.6	Richard Irvine explained that the SIU has been proactive in providing information to the veterinary profession in relation to Schmallenberg virus, but how that information trickles down to the individual private vets and farmers is beyond government's control and is a challenge that needs ownership from all.

5	Update on the GB Surveillance Framework, with current draft document
5.1	Gordon Hickman thanked the AHSGB members for completing work on the draft Framework.
5.2	Gavin Watkins explained that we do now have a drafted document that outlines the 'Policy Ask' for surveillance and this has been reviewed by this Board.
5.3	Graeme Cooke highlighted that as he has recently taken up the post of Deputy CVO-UK, and is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for surveillance, he has reviewed the recommendations and outcomes from the SAG report (2012) and Surveillance 2014, and in comparison with the current framework document there are some gaps that need filling to ensure that the framework applies across GB at all levels. He would like the framework to describe the capability required to deliver a GB surveillance system; he asked the Board to allow him to do this and develop it in this way, which was agreed.

6	Update on the Review of the AHSGB
6.1	Graeme Cooke explained that the review of the AHSGB had been slowed down due to the recent Avian Influenza outbreak.
6.2	Ingrid Kiss thanked everyone at the meeting for taking the time to meet with her, and be interviewed and her aim is to have the report prepared by mid-April.
6.3	Following the review Graeme Cooke explained that consideration would be needed of the objectives of the AHSGB and next steps. Nigel Gibbens has remained external to the review and GC will be taking this forward to conclusion.
6.4	The Board thanked Ingrid Kiss for her time and effort in undertaking the review.

7	Surveillance Communications Update
7.1	Articles have been published in the Farmer's Guardian and Farmer's Weekly so far this year in relation to the carcass collection changes. Unfortunately when the articles were published by Farmers Weekly some editorial errors were introduced which the Surveillance Intelligence Unit have provided corrections for.

7.2	Nick Fenwick proposed that the AHSGB Chair write to the publications to thank them for publishing, highlighting the importance of the articles and the information therein.
7.3	It was agreed that Jane Tennant and Richard Irvine would ensure all relevant communications matters arising from the discussions at this meeting were passed to the APHA comms team.
7.4	Ian McGrath suggested that publications are not only submitted to the weekly farming press, but also to more focused papers, e.g. British Dairy. Richard Irvine explained that he is also working through the SEGs to target sector specific and national publications. The issue of accessing all farmers was raised; briefings and articles still don't reach everyone. Ian McGrath suggested that surveillance needs to be of equal priority in the farming press as the market tables are; farmers will pick up the paper and turn straight to those tables, and it would be ideal if surveillance could become one of the standard items that all farmers look for. Currently engagement with industry is not consistent.
7.5	Richard Irvine updated the Board that the SIU are looking at communications overall, APHA outreach activities and presence at agricultural shows. There is a campaign to ask farmers about their awareness of the surveillance network, which will be conducted via agricultural shows during the year.
7.6	The Board asked for a central communications point, which was provided. Richard Irvine explained that the Veterinary Record monthly reports from the SIU will be available to anyone toll-free via revised webpages; this includes a general and a focus topical article each month. The SIU is also developing the use of social media to communicate more widely, to try and ensure that communications are accessible, relatable, modern, visual and open to all.
7.7	Michael Seals thanked everyone on the AHSGB for their time over recent years, and that he appreciates their input; he then left the meeting.

8	Responses from Sector Groups to the AHSGB
8.1	Paul Roger introduced the questions that were sent to the sector groups from the Board and gave an overview of the responses received. The Board were asked to consider the responses from the industry bodies, the background of animal health and welfare, and the original recommendations that came from the SAG report and have the AHSGB recommendations alongside.
8.2	Each sector has datasets which are not yet being used and Paul Burr noted that there were many similarities between the responses.
8.3	Richard Irvine proposed that benchmarking was a common theme and key issue in the responses; data held by retailer and welfare assurance schemes could be used towards benchmarking if it could be collected and anonymised. There is a wealth of information and data available but how it is brought together and used anonymously is a difficult issue.
8.4	Looking where new and re-emerging threats have been found in the past has shown

	that it is the relationship with farmers and vets is very important. Alerts, and so relationships, are vital. Paul Roger agreed and explained that this is why it is important to remember the next layer of expertise and the future expertise, and to ensure that the top of the pyramid is developed and that this is included in the GB Surveillance Framework.
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9	Measures of Surveillance
9.1	Richard Irvine presented a draft paper giving an overview of all of the current measures and indicators of surveillance, some of which are management metrics rather than specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
9.2	It was agreed that the Surveillance Intelligence Unit, led by Richard Irvine would present indicators for surveillance that can be measured and that the Board can approve at the next AHSGB meeting.

10	Scanning Surveillance Development Programme Update
10.1	Graeme Cooke gave an introduction to the Scanning Surveillance Development Programme (SSDP). As the new SRO for the SSDP he wanted to understand what needs to happen in the next 12 months, which coincided with the SIU's review of the work.
10.2	Gavin Watkins explained that the Welsh Government welcome the SSDP and will cross-check with the SAG/S2014 and AHSGB recommendations to ensure all aspects are included so that all the requirements of S2014 are met.
10.3	Graeme Cooke gave an overview of the SSDP plan for the coming 12 months, and longer term; the first few projects (webpages, dashboards and 3 rd party post mortem provider contracts) are well underway, the project to review the VIO role and career pathway is under discussion, and the Governance review project is underway. The review of the AHSGB report is awaited and will feed into the SRO role.
10.4	Richard Irvine advised that the IT based projects are broken into small delivery pieces. He highlighted that clear identification of the resource requirements as part of developing the projects in the SSDP are key to enabling delivery.
10.5	Richard Irvine stated that all work in the 12 month plan is currently on target.
10.6	Decision Point regarding the Scanning Surveillance Development Programme: The Board were presented with the current SSDP and were asked to provide feedback. Approval was unanimously given, understanding that agreement for the SSDP was needed for it to move forward now.

11	Next meetings
11.1	Dates for the next meetings were confirmed as: Wednesday 7 th June – Birmingham, Thursday 21 st September – Cardiff & Thursday 7 th December – Nobel House, London

12	Any Other Business
12.1	The Board's response to a letter received by the AHSGB Secretariat was discussed.