Science Advisory Council exotic and emerging animal disease sub group (SAC-ED)

Terms of Reference (2018)

 Overarching aim: In relation to animal diseases SAC-ED will have two main functions: in an emergency situation and during the absence of a disease outbreak. Overall, it will respond to requests from the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) and the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO).

This may include providing advice in relation to emerging animal disease outbreaks and to the Devolved Administrations, at their request.

2. In the event of a significant animal exotic disease outbreak, it will:

- a) Review evidence and analysis supporting Defra's disease control and recovery phase policies and their implementation
- b) Identify any issues or gaps and advise how they might be addressed

SAC-ED will be kept informed of key developments in any animal disease outbreak or emerging animal disease. This will include the reason for and the outcome of any expert groups. Examples of scenarios which could trigger SAC-ED are recorded in **Annex A**.

3. During the absence of an animal disease outbreak it will convene an annual meeting to:

- a) Advise and challenge Defra's preparedness to deploy evidence and analysis in support of exotic disease control.
- b) Refresh or update procedures in light of what had happened over the preceding year. This might involve Quality Assurance on the application of procedures and scientific support implications.
- c) Review the group's function and membership.

4. Governance and Membership

The SAC-ED is a sub group of the Defra SAC. It will be chaired by Professor James Wood who will report to the SAC. A number of independent academic co-optees will provide additional expertise. If required, additional specific expertise may be co-opted.

SAC-ED co-optees are not recruited through open competition, but are appointed based on their specific skills and experience. The SAC-ED co-optees act independently of any of their other interests.

The sub group will be ongoing. However, it will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains appropriate to Defra.

Examples where SAC-ED would be triggered

- In any case of Foot and Mouth Disease. The sub group will not be called upon to act immediately. The SAC-ED will become involved when enough information has emerged.
- 2. Notwithstanding the above point, SAC-ED will be engaged at an early stage of significant animal disease outbreaks. An "early warning" call, by the Chief Scientific Adviser's Office will ensure the sub group Chair is informed.
- 3. Other animal disease outbreaks where there is movement from sporadic cases to an ongoing progression, ie an epidemic in lay rather than technical terms.
- 4. Any animal disease outbreak for which Defra deploys modelling internally and externally.
- 5. An animal disease outbreak that progresses to require novel approaches to be developed with a need for underpinning evidence.
- 6. To provide advice specifically from an economic or social science perspective.
- 7. An animal disease outbreak in the Devolved Administrations (DA), at their request.