



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Environment and Rural Affairs Department

Scottish Executive Response

To

The Foot and Mouth Disease Inquiries

November 2002



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Making it work together

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO:

**Lessons to be Learned;
Royal Society; and
Royal Society of Edinburgh
Inquiries into Foot and Mouth Disease**

November 2002

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FOREWORD BY ROSS FINNIE

Although the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in Scotland was eradicated within 3 months, it has left an indelible mark on the memories of all those involved, including our farming industry, those affected in the wider rural community and the public at large.

It is vital that lessons are learned from such a serious outbreak. Everything possible must be done to avoid a recurrence of any exotic disease, such as Foot and Mouth Disease. But, in the event of a serious epidemic arising again, arrangements must be in place to limit its impact to an absolute minimum.

The process of analysing and reviewing the recent outbreak and applying lessons learned from it to the Scottish Executive's disease prevention and control procedures must be thorough. It must also be driven by the science and take full account of scientific developments. The Executive has made major strides since the outbreak in reviewing these procedures. But the publication of the Reports commissioned into the outbreak give us, in partnership with the United Kingdom Government, the opportunity to address fully what must be done, on the basis of comprehensive evidence and clear recommendations. The contributions made by Dr Iain Anderson, who chaired the Lessons Learned Inquiry and by Sir Brian Follet, who led the Royal Society Inquiry into Infectious Diseases in Livestock, are both valuable; as are the wide-ranging recommendations of Professor Ian Cunningham, chairman of the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Inquiry, which is exclusive to Scotland.

This Scottish Executive publication responds to all three Reports. It also indicates what will be our practical disease prevention and disease control measures for the future. A great deal of work is needed to ensure that the right measures will be available at the right time. This will be taken forward in full consultation with Scottish Stakeholders and will be kept under regular review. That is essential so as to provide adequate protection for Scotland's extremely valuable livestock industry. Some of this work will necessarily be carried out on a Great Britain basis and we shall be taking it forward in due course in the context of a comprehensive GB Animal Health and Welfare Strategy, work on which is already underway. That Strategy, when published next spring, will complement the Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture.

Finally, I record my thanks to Dr Iain Anderson, Sir Brian Follet, Professor Ian Cunningham and those who supported them in producing their valued Reports. I also pay tribute to all those who strove tirelessly during the outbreak to eradicate the disease here in Scotland.

ROSS FINNIE, MSP

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

1. The 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak was unprecedented in its scale and impact on the farming industry as well as other sectors of the rural economy, including tourism. The outbreak affected all four countries within the United Kingdom. 187 of the 2,030 confirmed cases in the UK were in Scotland. The impact of FMD – both economic and social – placed a significant burden on those affected in both agriculture and the wider rural economy. A detailed study is currently in progress to assess the impact of FMD on the Scottish economy but provisional assessments made in 2001 suggested that this FMD outbreak cost the farming sector around £60m and the tourism sector around £200m. Concerted and co-ordinated effort by the Scottish Executive, Local Authorities and other agencies, and Scotland's farming and meat and livestock industry made it possible to control, then completely eradicate the disease within 3 months. The last case was on 30 May 2001. The outbreak was confined to Dumfries and Galloway and a small part of the Scottish Borders. Rigorous containment of the disease safeguarded much of Scotland's valuable livestock sector and, in due course, this helped the Executive's case for the early recommencement of meat exports.

2. Recognising the level of national as well as international interest in this major incident, its handling, its wider consequences and its cost, the UK Government with the agreement of the Scottish Executive decided to commission two Inquiries covering Great Britain as follows:

- Dr Iain Anderson chaired an Inquiry into the Lessons to be Learned with the remit of reviewing the handling of the FMD outbreak in Great Britain to draw out lessons and make recommendations for the future.
- Sir Brian Follett chaired the Royal Society Inquiry into Infectious Diseases in Livestock, looking specifically into questions related to transmission, prevention and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious diseases in livestock in Great Britain.

3. In addition to these two Inquiries, the Royal Society of Edinburgh conducted its own Inquiry. This Inquiry is specific to Scotland and concentrates on the outbreak here. Annex C contains the terms of reference of each Inquiry.

4. An investigation was also carried out by the National Audit Office at a GB level. This Response does not deal with specific recommendations raised by the NAO but the principles advanced by the NAO are recognised in the Executive's overall approach.

5. It should also be noted that the Scottish Executive initiated its own internal Management Review in summer 2001 which reported by the end of that year. That Review identified a number of specific lessons which the Executive needed to learn and address about its internal processes. The conclusions of the Report were made available to the FMD Inquiries to inform their analysis, as well as to the Scottish Parliament's Rural Development Committee. Again the specific recommendations from that internal Review are not dealt with here but the thrust of what is recommended, which has been accepted by the Executive, is reflected in this Response.

6. In January 2002 the European Parliament established a Temporary Committee to investigate the causes of the 2001 FMD outbreak and to review EU policy in this area. Scottish Ministers have contributed to the work of this Committee and its report is expected in December 2002.

CHAPTER II – ACTION FOLLOWING THE 2001 OUTBREAK

7. Each of the three Inquiries (Lessons to be Learned, Royal Society and Royal Society of Edinburgh) referred to above contains a wealth of extremely useful background material, much detailed analysis and in total the three Reports make 141 valuable recommendations. The Executive's Response to the individual recommendations is set out in Chapter III.

8. The general recognition that the outbreak was handled comparatively well in Scotland, with effective partnership between the different parties involved, is a source of satisfaction, particularly considering that so many people gave their unstinting commitment to the disease control effort during the outbreak itself. The Executive nevertheless remains determined to take whatever steps are necessary to learn from the devastating experience of 2001 and to do everything possible to avoid a recurrence of the recent outbreak.

9. Dr Iain Anderson's Report recommends steps be taken with a view to:

- keeping out infectious agents of exotic disease;
- reducing livestock vulnerability by reforms in industry practice;
- minimising the impact of any future outbreak.

10. The Executive fully agrees with this approach and progress in each of these areas is set out below. It is important to note, however, that, unavoidably, effective disease prevention and control must be carried out on a GB basis. Our work in responding to the FMD outbreak is being carried out in close co-operation with DEFRA and the Welsh Assembly. It will also link up with a much wider initiative involving the production of a comprehensive Animal Health & Welfare Strategy, the aim of which is to take a more proactive and strategic approach. As Great Britain is a single epidemiological unit, the Strategy will be drawn up on a GB basis. Stakeholder involvement at GB and Scottish levels in tackling this major exercise will be crucial. Maintaining and, where possible, improving Scotland's animal health and welfare status is very important in underpinning our reputation for the production of quality meat and livestock. In drawing up the Strategy, it will be important to recognise distinctive Scottish features, and provision will be made for significant differentiation on such issues as local delivery. The Animal Health and Welfare Strategy will be consistent with the Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture.

Keeping out exotic disease agents

11. The UK is a major international trading nation. There are extensive movements of goods and people to and from our shores. It is estimated that there are 6 million containers of imported product landed in the UK every year and there are 60 million passenger movements through Heathrow Airport alone. Although four-fifths of the meat and meat preparations coming into the UK are from other Member States some may have their origin outwith the Community. The Community is scheduled to grow in size with 10 countries due to join over the coming years thus extending the Community boundaries and raising the volume of intra-Community trade. It is estimated that imports of meat and meat preparations from non-EU countries were worth around £900 million in 2001.

12. The greatest risk of introducing exotic disease agents into the UK is posed by large-scale smuggling of meat or animal products from non-EU countries. Guarding against such introductions is a major challenge, particularly when account is taken of the impracticability of searching every container and stopping and questioning every airline or ferry passenger. Clearly any action designed to tackle these issues needs to cover the country as a whole and needs to be focused on the areas where trade flows are greatest and the risk is highest. Importantly, efforts to contain this trade need to be fully co-ordinated.

13. Although the amount of meat and animal products consigned to Scotland from third countries is relatively small, it is of course acknowledged that it is possible that illegal products can arrive here and that they could come in through onward shipment from an English port or airport. The Scottish Executive has been liaising with Scottish Port Health Authorities and Scottish local authorities to tighten up controls wherever possible. The Executive has also been working very closely with Whitehall Departments in an effort to reduce the overall risk of diseased product entry into the UK as a whole. Much still needs to be done but useful progress has already been made as follows:

- Following pressure from the UK the EU has now been persuaded that the “personal allowance” of 1 kg of meat or meat products which travellers have been allowed to bring into the EU from third countries will be banned from 2003.
- Scrutiny of imported product has been stepped up. Enhanced checks and controls have been put in place and more staff have been recruited to police the controls.
- Public awareness campaigns have been stepped up at ports and airports to ensure that all concerned are much more aware of the risks involved.
- The Veterinary Laboratory Agency has been commissioned to conduct a detailed risk assessment, which will help enforcement agencies target resources in an effort to raise seizure levels.
- A review of the whole system of import controls and the role of the Agencies responsible is underway by the Machinery of Government Secretariat.

14. Much work has been done already to address the illegal imports problem but more will be required to tackle this major challenge of seeking to eliminate the risk of importing exotic disease agents. The Scottish Executive is, and will be, playing its full part in the process.

Reducing livestock vulnerability by reforms in industry practice

15. However, hard as Government and industry may work together to prevent exotic diseases entering the country, the risk that diseases may arrive undetected, probably by illegal means, cannot be eliminated. Reflecting this, a number of reforms have been made to reduce the risk of disease entering or spreading through the country.

16. A complete ban on the use of pigswill was introduced in Scotland in May 2001. The UK has also supported the development of an EU regulation, which has now been approved, to ban the use of pigswill on a pan-European basis. The Scottish Executive published a consultation paper outlining a draft Biosecurity Code of Practice in March 2002. This has been drawn up with the industry and after an extensive consultation exercise the code is currently before the Scottish Parliament seeking a statutory basis. The code provides a useful guidance on good biosecurity practice for keepers of livestock. It also provides guidance for other users of farmland e.g. walkers and utility workers.

17. The Code is only part of the process and we will be working with the industry after its finalisation to ensure that the message is constantly refreshed. As such, a website is being developed to add further, and more detailed advice; Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) has been funded to provide a source of biosecurity advice to the industry, and the Scottish Executive is working to help develop a training module for use on agriculture related courses, which provides instruction on good biosecurity practice.

18. The large number of animal movements across GB was an important factor in explaining the wide geographic spread of the outbreak. Animal movements are necessary, particularly in Scotland, where the stratified nature of the industry requires stock to be moved at particular times of the year due to the need to buy in breeding stock or move store stock from hill areas to the low ground areas for fattening.

19. Farm to farm movements of animals within 20 days are also covered by a legislative ban subject to certain exemptions. In Scotland there are also, subject to prior approval, exceptions from the 20-day standstill for animals which are held separately. These arrangements were introduced following detailed discussion with the Scottish livestock industry and apply for 2002. As recommended in the Lessons Learned Report, a detailed cost benefit analysis and risk assessment is being carried out into the impact of the 20 day standstill rule. This work will be taken into full account before deciding what permanent movement regime is required to safeguard the industry for the future.

20. Work has also been taken forward to enhance the level of animal traceability and a sheep traceability system was established in February 2002. This is an important development in giving greater knowledge of animals' origins and destinations.

21. Veterinary surveillance is fundamental in detecting disease in its early stages and incursion from abroad. A strategy for veterinary surveillance is currently being developed and a draft will be put out to consultation later in the year.

Minimising the impact of any disease

22. It is important that plans are in place to ensure a quick and effective response to any disease outbreak. Whilst well developed and rehearsed local contingency plans were in place before the 2001 outbreak, the Executive has now complemented these with the publication of a draft FMD contingency plan for Scotland. This was put out to stakeholder consultation and is in the process of being finalised. The plan outlines how the disease control effort will be managed and how the close partnership arrangements used in 2001 will be further developed to reflect lessons learned. It will help to manage expectations of policy actions which will be

taken in a future outbreak such as the immediate introduction of a livestock movement ban and the creation of a Blue Box¹ to increase the level of biosecurity in an infected area.

23. Once revised, the Scottish contingency plan will be kept under review. Reflecting the fact that a response to any outbreak must be a partnership between the Executive and industry, local authorities and other key stakeholders, it will be discussed on an annual basis with the Animal Health and Welfare Stakeholder Group. It will also be subject to regular rehearsals, which will be undertaken to ensure that the plan is capable of delivery and that key players are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the eventuality of any new outbreak.

24. In addition to outlining the processes that will be associated with disease response, the Scottish Executive is also actively developing the idea of having a cadre of staff who are trained and can be deployed in an emergency situation. This is also being supported by a programme of work, at the GB level, addressing issues on how the existing State Veterinary Service resource can be enhanced during a disease outbreak.

25. Vaccination was an issue very much in the public mind in 2001. It is not an easy topic given the complexities that surround the use of vaccination such as the trigger point for its use, the differentiation between vaccinated and infected animals, significant trade barriers and issues of consumer acceptability. In a speech to the European Parliament's Temporary Committee into FMD, Ross Finnie outlined the importance of ensuring these issues are resolved, so that where vaccination is a practicable alternative we can avoid repeating the 2001 experience of mass slaughter. Many of these issues need to be addressed at the international level and the Scottish Executive will work with the UK Government and the EU to ensure that they are resolved. Some issues can only be resolved through further research and development. However, while many important issues are outstanding, vaccination should be part of the disease control toolkit and part of the Contingency Plan. Therefore the Plan includes a workstream to ensure that vaccination facilities can be put in place at the start of any future outbreak, in case it is required as part of the disease control strategy. The judgement on whether to apply it will be taken in the light of the veterinary advice at the time. (For a more detailed discussion, please see the section dealing with Vaccination, starting at paragraph 133)

Delivery

26. Under the terms of the Scotland Act 1998, animal health is fully devolved to Scottish Ministers, who are themselves accountable to the Scottish Parliament. In delivering animal health policy the Scottish Executive is supported by the State Veterinary Service (SVS) through a network of local Animal Health Offices which are responsible for local delivery. A veterinary unit within the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department's (SEERAD) Edinburgh headquarters also provides independent veterinary advice to the Scottish Executive. This professional support both at headquarters and in the field is led by the Chief Veterinary Officer (Scotland).

¹ The Blue Box, or Restricted Infected Area provides a heightened degree of biosecurity in the area around an infected premise. The Blue Box is explained in more detail at paragraph 106.

27. The Chief Veterinary Officer post is a recent redesignation of the former Assistant Chief Veterinary Officer position. The change (announced in the Scottish Parliament on 10 October 2002) more fully reflects the post's breadth of responsibilities - in particular its responsibility to give independent veterinary advice to the Scottish Executive. It also takes account of the restructuring of the State Veterinary Service across Great Britain.

28. The redesignation of the post results from a review which the Scottish Executive has undertaken of the provision of veterinary advice and support to its animal health and welfare responsibilities. In reviewing this issue the Scottish Executive has decided, in conjunction with Ministerial colleagues in England and Wales, that the State Veterinary Service should remain a GB-wide organisation. This reflects the importance of close co-operation and communication amongst veterinary colleagues in a single epidemiological unit and also the substantial benefits that are associated with sharing of technical and other resources.

29. However, the analysis of the role of the SVS in Scotland combined with lessons from the FMD outbreak, as well as restructuring of the SVS within DEFRA, have required some changes to the organisation's management. Whilst agreeing on the significant benefits of maintaining a GB-wide SVS it was apparent that further steps need to be taken to increase the accountability of the SVS to Scottish Ministers and make more explicit the different approaches which are required across GB in the delivery of front line services. As such a decision has been taken to create a SVS Management Board which will have the remit to:

- set the strategic direction of the SVS;
- consider and approve annually the SVS business plan;
- review annually SVS performance against its targets; and
- ensure that there is an appropriate and efficient match between the resources available to the SVS and the requirements placed on it throughout Great Britain.

The Scottish Executive will be represented on the Board by the Head of the Food and Agriculture Group in SEERAD. The details of the Management Board will be reflected in revisions to the Scottish Executive/DEFRA/SVS Concordat and the new structure will come into effect on 1 April 2003.

CHAPTER III – INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

3a. OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

30. The two GB-wide Inquiries provide a number of overarching principles which serve as a guide to the more detailed recommendations which flow from them. The overall thinking of the Anderson Inquiry is summed up in a set of nine lessons to be learned from the painful and complex experience of the 2001 outbreak, with a further recommendation suggesting a strategic approach should be taken. These led Dr Anderson to propose a national strategy which would have three main aims :

- keeping out infectious agents;
- reducing livestock vulnerability; and,
- minimising the impact of an outbreak if it did occur.

Dr Anderson is clear, however, that while risk can be reduced by this strategy, it cannot be totally eliminated.

LL 1: Maintain vigilance through international, national and local surveillance and reconnaissance.

LL 2: Be prepared with comprehensive contingency plans, building mutual trust and confidence through training and practice.

LL 3: React with speed and certainty to an emergency or escalating crises by applying well-rehearsed crisis management procedures.

LL 4: Explain policies, plans and practices by communicating with all interested parties comprehensively, clearly and consistently in a transparent and open way.

LL 5: Respect local knowledge and delegate decisions wherever possible, without losing sight of the national strategy.

LL 6: Apply risk assessment and cost benefit analysis within an appropriate economic model.

LL 7: Use data and information management systems to conform to recognised good practice in support of intelligence gathering and decision making.

LL 8: Have a legislative framework that gives government the powers needed to respond effectively to the emerging needs of a crisis.

LL 9: Base policy decisions on best available science and ensure that the processes for providing scientific advice are widely understood and trusted.

LL 10: These Lessons should be incorporated into a national strategy designed to:

- Keep out infectious agents of exotic disease
- Reduce livestock vulnerability by reforms in industry practice
- Minimise the impact of the outbreak

31. Similarly the Royal Society offers ten “key findings” which summarise its approach and guide the development of its more detailed recommendations.

RS Key Finding 1 - The overall objective must be to minimise risk of disease entering the country and to prevent an outbreak from turning into an epidemic. (vii)

RS Key Finding 2 - EU and UK should keep “disease-free status without routine vaccination”, though this might change, e.g. if the risk of an outbreak increased sharply, better vaccines became available, or the trading regulations associated with disease-free status were further changed, so should be kept under review. (vii)

RS Key Finding 3 - Better contingency planning, with plans debated and approved by Parliament, rehearsed each year and reviewed triennially. (vii)

RS Key Finding 4 - EU and UK must strengthen their early warning systems, through an EU risk and surveillance unit, more funding for OIE reference laboratories, better on-farm surveillance with more interaction between farmers and vets, and tightening of import controls. (vii)

RS Key Finding 5 - Routine vaccination is possible, but current technical problems and trade regulations argue against it. Nevertheless, it is clear that the long-term solution is to develop a vaccine against FMD (and other diseases such as classical swine fever) that confers life-long immunity against all strains of the virus. An international effort is needed to develop this. (vii)

RS Key Finding 6 - To prevent an outbreak turning into an epidemic, animal movements should be minimised at all times. Early warning of infection should trigger enhanced precautionary measures. (vii)

RS Key Finding 7 - Culling of IPs and DCs will remain essential, but, given recent advances in vaccine science and improved trading regulations, emergency vaccination to live should now be considered as part of the control strategy from the start of any outbreak: the Government should prepare the regulatory framework and practical arrangements (e.g. validation of tests, and the supply of vaccines) which would allow this. An exit strategy must be agreed with the main stakeholders to allow the country to return to “disease-free without vaccination” status. (viii)

RS Key Finding 8 - The first suspected case of an outbreak must be diagnosed in an approved OIE reference laboratory. Modern diagnostic tests (including pen-side tests) need to be developed to shift the burden of diagnosis onto vets on farm, and must be linked by modern telecommunications to HQ. (viii)

RS Key Finding 9 - Quantitative modelling is an essential tool: a prerequisite for this is a central database including improved data on farms, location of animals, animal movements, the characteristics of the disease and arrangements to input disease control data in a timely and assured way during an outbreak. Existing models need to be refined. (viii)

RS Key Finding 10 - A national strategy for animal disease research should be developed, through a “virtual national centre for animal disease research and surveillance” involving IAH, VLA, universities, private research institutes and publicly funded research in Scotland and Northern Ireland. (viii)

32. The Royal Society of Edinburgh adopts a slightly different approach, providing 27 focused recommendations arising from their discussions in the text, rather than giving a framework under which detailed recommendations are grouped.

Responding to Recommendations

33. The Scottish Executive finds the lessons learned and key findings invaluable as guidance for taking its work on animal health and welfare forward and accepts them fully. Most of these recommendations are points of principle and the Scottish Executive responds to them in more detail in the specific recommendations which the three Inquiries have made. In responding to them the Scottish Executive's response largely reflects Dr Anderson's 3-pronged strategy and its key themes.

34. As such the Scottish Executive's intention is to build on the combined results of the three reports. A number of recommendations are already being taken forward and others are to be initiated. This response outlines how.

35. Whilst many of the recommendations are addressed to DEFRA, the Scottish Executive, as the responsible authority for all Animal Health issues in Scotland, is responding here to all those relevant to the situation in Scotland and the wider animal health agenda. Most of the areas identified for DEFRA to take forward are either devolved or have a significant impact on the management of a devolved policy area. Many of the recommendations cannot, however, be taken forward by Scotland alone but the majority are either led by the Scottish Executive or with significant Scottish Executive input and the response explains how the Scottish Executive will be working with other UK Rural Affairs Departments to see them implemented.

INDIVIDUAL RECOMMENDATIONS & RESPONSES

3b COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP

LL R1: We recommend that the Government, led by DEFRA, should develop a national strategy for animal health and disease control positioned within the framework set out in the report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food. This strategy should be developed in consultation and partnership with the farming industry and with representatives of the wider rural economy. The European Commission, the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, local authorities and other agencies of government should be involved in this process. (p12)

Working with Stakeholders

36. The importance of Stakeholder relationships is highlighted in all three reports. As noted in Chapter II, Scottish Ministers want to build on this and have agreed with their Ministerial counterparts in DEFRA and the Welsh Assembly to work together to produce an Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain. This strategic approach to animal health and welfare reflects the reality that Great Britain is a single epidemiological unit and reflects the importance of co-operation in dealing with animal health issues on this basis. The strategy will reinforce a number of long term partnerships between the Agriculture Departments and will, for the first time, formalise the important role that stakeholders have in informing the development of animal health and welfare related policies. The strategy will outline how animal health policy will be devolved in Scotland and how Scottish stakeholders will be involved in that process.

LL R2: We recommend that lessons learned be routinely reviewed in the light of changing circumstances. Policies, plans and preparations should be adapted accordingly. (p25)

37. To manage the GB Animal Health and Welfare Strategy there will be a GB stakeholder group. To ensure that there is focus on the Scotland-specific interests, a Scottish Animal Health and Welfare Group has already been formed to build on those relationships developed in 2001, which will contribute to the Strategy's development. It will have a formal role in overseeing the development of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy from the Scottish perspective. In addition to this oversight role the group will act as an advisory forum to ensure that industry and other stakeholder interests are reflected in the development of animal health and welfare related policies in Scotland.

38. The strategy will involve a fundamental review of existing animal health and welfare policies and it is the role of the stakeholder group to ensure that changes in industry practice are reflected in both policies and contingency planning arrangements. The stakeholder group will also have an important role in providing a mechanism to assist the Executive in its awareness of industry developments.

Explaining and Justifying Policy

LL R9: We recommend that accepted best practice in risk analysis be used by DEFRA and others in developing livestock health and disease control strategies. (p38)

LL R52: We recommend that cost-benefit analyses on FMD control strategies should be updated and maintained. These should be undertaken at both the UK and EU level. (p139)

LL R63: We recommend that disease control policies be developed in consultation with those local authorities responsible for implementing them. (p153)

39. The Strategy will be taken forward with all Stakeholders – including operational and enforcement partners such as the local authorities. It will provide a clear outline of the Strategy’s objectives – which will be consulted on – and delivery mechanisms. By placing all animal health and welfare policy within one strategic context, all policies will be clearly explained and justified. Science based analysis will be an important element in supporting the development and explanation of policy.

Wider Rural Dimensions

LL R32: We recommend that, where the control of exotic animal diseases has wider economic or other implications, the Government ensure that those consequences for the country as a whole are fully considered. (p86)

LL R51: We recommend that the interests of all the sectors likely to bear the brunt of any costs be properly represented and taken into account when designing policy options to control animal disease outbreaks. (p139)

RSE 1: In considering the options for controlling FMD, the Scottish Executive must take account of the effects on the wider interests of the rural economy and involve the appropriate stakeholders. (para 43)

LL R40: We recommend that, in future, a representative of the wider rural economy be invited to participate in the Joint Co-ordination Centre. (p106)

40. The Scottish Executive is responsible for rural development policy in Scotland and its vision is outlined in “Rural Scotland: A New Approach”. The lessons of 2001 highlighted the continuing inter-linkages between agriculture and the rest of the rural economy. A key aspect of this was the access issue (see para 163) and it is clear that such linkages cannot be ignored. In taking the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy forward full account will be taken of wider effects, and stakeholders covering broader rural and environmental interests will also be consulted.

41. The issue of wider effects will be important in terms of considering policies aimed at minimising the risk of future outbreaks. However, there remains a risk that outbreaks will occur. The draft Scottish FMD Contingency plan recognises this and in the eventuality of an outbreak an Impact Assessment Group will be created to inform the disease control managers of wider impacts as well as advising Ministers on any relief and recovery measures which may be required.

State Veterinary Service

42. As explained in Chapter II, the Scottish Executive has been discussing the future of the SVS with other GB Agricultural Departments. The views emerging from these discussions was that there are continued benefits – reinforced by the experiences of 2001 – to keeping the SVS as a GB-wide organisation. However, it was also clear that a number of changes were required to make the SVS more explicitly accountable to Scottish Ministers. A key part of this development was the creation of an SVS Management Board, which would include senior Scottish Executive representation.

RSE 15: The post of Chief Veterinary Officer (Scotland) should be created with direct responsibility for all aspects of veterinary matters, including the eradication of FMD; and nationally agreed control measures (including relevant protocols) should be devolved within the context of a Scottish Contingency Plan with responsibility being invested in the Chief Veterinary Officer (Scotland). (para 153)

RSE 16: Funding for the State Veterinary Service in Scotland should become the responsibility of SEERAD with an appropriate transfer of funding from DEFRA. (para 154)

43. In addition to creating the Management Board, the head of the SVS in Scotland has been redesignated to be Chief Veterinary Officer (Scotland) to reflect more fully the post's breadth of responsibilities. In addition to leading the SVS operations in Scotland, CVO (Scotland) is also responsible for giving Scottish Ministers independent veterinary advice. The Executive considers that these changes, together with related changes to the concordat between SEERAD and the SVS, will significantly strengthen the accountability of the SVS to Scottish Ministers and its ability to respond to the different political and practical circumstances in Scotland.

44. Given the changes to increase the accountability of the SVS to Scottish Ministers and the Management Board's responsibilities in setting the organisation's priorities, the Scottish Executive does not think it necessary to seek a funding transfer from DEFRA. The funding issue had been considered in some depth at the time of Devolution. As the SVS is being retained as a GB-wide organisation, a funding transfer would serve no purpose since the logical step after the transfer would be to pass these funds back to DEFRA in return for the SVS operations in Scotland (as well as a share for GB overheads). This would be unnecessarily bureaucratic and a transfer of funding would not be consistent with the retention of a GB wide service.

Access to Professional Advice

RSE 14: The role of the Scottish Minister should be integral to UK decision-making and he should have access to advice in accordance with his specific accountability to the Scottish Parliament for animal health and disease control. (para 150)

45. Animal health and welfare is fully devolved to the Scottish Parliament but given the nature of disease prevention and control within a single epidemiological unit, strong co-ordination between administrations is required. As such professional advice is supplied by the SVS which is accountable to all GB Agriculture Ministers. The role of the Head of the SVS in Scotland in this respect has been deliberately strengthened by his redesignation as Chief Veterinary Officer (Scotland) with explicit recognition of his right to give independent

advice to Scottish Ministers, which will be incorporated in the concordat. In addition to this there are regular contacts at Ministerial and policy levels. In the eventuality of a disease outbreak a liaison officer would be sent to London to facilitate communication between Agriculture Departments.

Relocation of SVS Posts

LL R70: We recommend as many functions of the State Veterinary Service as possible to be relocated from London, to regional centres, particularly to Scotland and Wales. (p161)

46. This recommendation largely stems from the recruitment problems Dr Anderson identified in terms of filling veterinary vacancies in London and the South East. Given that animal health is fully devolved to the Scottish Executive, the SVS in Scotland is already responsible for a wide range of functions and it would be difficult to identify what could be relocated to Scotland. There is no substantive recruitment problem for the SVS Scottish posts, which are currently up to strength. However, the Scottish Executive will support DEFRA in their consideration of this issue, which will most likely be discussed by the SVS Management Board.

Enhancing SVS Resources

LL R3: We recommend that there be a reappraisal of Local Veterinary Inspectors' roles and conditions. (p28)

LL R69: We recommend that Government develop opportunities for increased use of veterinary 'paramedics'. (p160)

RSE 17: The SVS and SEERAD should establish a body of contracted veterinary surgeons, RVIs external to the SVS, that would be on standby for the control of any future FMD outbreaks or any other major disease outbreaks. All those participating as RVIs should be paid a retainer on the understanding that they would be immediately available in the event of an emergency. (para 163)

47. Local Veterinary Inspectors and Temporary Veterinary Inspectors played a very important part in supporting the standing veterinary resources available to the SVS during the 2001 outbreak. The draft contingency plan explains that private veterinary surgeons will have an important role in any future outbreak. A GB work-stream is in place to look at the future role of LVIs in a disease outbreak - particularly in terms of what sort of training would be required to prepare them. This work is being taken forward in conjunction with key stakeholders such as the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The Scottish Executive accepts that there is a case for expertise of this type. The SVS were assisted during the 2001 outbreak by a body of Animal Health Officers, which was supplemented by suitably qualified and experienced personnel.

SVS Forms

LL R58: We recommend that the State Veterinary Service revise all its disease control Forms A-E and information about exotic animal diseases in liaison with the Plain English Campaign. (p145)

48. The Scottish Executive supports this recommendation, which, although addressed to the SVS, is in line with the Executive's plan to build more effective, clear and user-friendly communications with its various stakeholders. The forms will be revised when the Foot and Mouth Order 1983 is next updated.

3c. KEEPING OUT DISEASE AGENTS

IMPORTS

49. It is recognised that the FMD virus is most likely to have arrived in the UK by the illegal import of animal products. The existence of illegal imports is of real concern to industry and Government alike and the Scottish Executive is working closely with the UK Government to deliver increased detection and prevention of illegal imports.

LL R12: We recommend that the Government ensure that best practice from import regimes elsewhere be incorporated with domestic practices where appropriate. (p47)

50. It is the Scottish Executive's view that import controls and regulations designed to control animal disease are best dealt with on a UK basis. For its part, the Executive accepts the recommendation that best practice be identified and incorporated into domestic controls. To this end the Executive is co-operating fully with a Cabinet Office review of the whole issue of illegal meat and plant imports. This involves all three devolved administrations, all Whitehall Departments with an interest, Port Health Authorities and local authorities. The review will examine the control measures used in other countries, particularly Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

LL R14: We recommend that DEFRA be given responsibility for co-ordinating all the activities of Government to step up efforts to keep illegal meat imports out of the country. This should include better regulations and improved surveillance on illegal imports of meat and meat products. (p48)

RS 5.2: DEFRA should promote the speedy implementation of the Action Plan on illegal importing and of a much more co-ordinated approach at all levels by all bodies concerned with import control. (p54)

RSE 12: The Government should carry out up-to-date assessments of risks in the light of the international situation; and that high priority be given to surveillance at points of entry to the UK, at markets, abattoirs and on farms. (para 137)

51. The Scottish Executive accepts the recommendation that DEFRA should lead in co-ordinating action against illegal meat imports, and will be collaborating fully at policy and operational level to ensure that this work is implemented rapidly and effectively. A full and detailed risk assessment has been commissioned. Its report, which is due in the autumn, will inform DEFRA, the devolved administrations and other agencies where resources should best be targeted. This work will meet the recommendation of the Royal Society of Edinburgh concerning risk assessment and surveillance at point of entry. Concurrent with this is a publicity campaign designed to increase awareness of the disease risk of imported products. Other deterrents will be examined in the light of the risk assessment.

LL R13: We recommend that the European Commission lead a targeted risk based approach designed to keep FMD out of EU Member States. The UK should work alongside other EU Member States to highlight areas of greater risk. (p47)

LL R64: We recommend that the UK urge the OIE to consider the implications, for the detection and control of FMD, of the removal of swine vesicular disease from the List A of Notifiable diseases. (p156)

52. The Scottish Executive shares the concern of other UK administrations and the EU that a new outbreak of disease may occur at any time, given the global incidence of many diseases. The accession of ten more countries to the EU in 2004 will create a longer land border across which disease may cross. The EU and the OIE are aware of these threats and monitor the location and movement pattern of major animal diseases. Swine Vesicular Disease is of particular importance because it resembles FMD in pigs, and is only distinguishable by lab testing. In order to characterise the threat to the UK more fully, the Government has commissioned an assessment of the risk of incursion of serious diseases including FMD. The results of this will be shared within the UK and with the EU.

RSE 11: The UK Government should press the EU to end the concession on the personal import of cooked meat into any member state from countries outside the Single Market and the European Economic Area and to impose stringent methods of inspection. (para 131)

53. The Scottish Executive accepts that personal imports of meat and meat products from third countries should no longer be permitted as such imports carry too significant a risk of disease. The UK government has already taken steps to secure a ban on personal meat imports and a draft EU regulation has been produced which will be in force from January 2003. This ban will enable improved enforcement and publicity.

SURVEILLANCE

54. Veterinary surveillance is critical in maintaining disease awareness and detecting emerging diseases. The Scottish Executive accepts that improved surveillance at all levels – international and domestic – needs to be developed. The topic was under review at the beginning of 2001 but work was interrupted by the needs of the disease control effort for classical swine fever and FMD. However, work on the Surveillance Strategy is an ongoing UK effort and a draft strategy will be published later this year.

International Surveillance

RS R1.2: The Prime Minister should establish a formal procedure to review at three-yearly intervals:

- the level of threat from imported animal diseases of livestock
- changes in livestock farming practices that could affect vulnerability to disease
- scientific and therapeutic advances that could affect policy options
- the UK's and Europe's state of preparedness. (p1)

RS 3.1: DEFRA should undertake a systematic analysis of the information available on the relative threats to the UK from the range of disease covered here (and other significant diseases such as TSEs and TB), taking into account the impact of globalisation and climate change in order to set priorities for the national strategy for animal disease and surveillance.

RS 5.1: DEFRA should propose an EU wide risk assessment unit and centralised database on surveillance and disease data, and a review of the bodies that provide early warning of animal disease threats. (p54)

55. The Scottish Executive shares the concerns of the Inquiries regarding the threat of disease from external sources. It sees early warning of disease movement as a key factor in mobilising other defences, very much on the principle of “forewarned is forearmed”. The Executive will be working with other administrations in support of these recommendations. The detailed Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) risk assessment of FMD virus entering the UK via imported meat will be shared with the European Commission to help develop future EU wide policy. Reflecting its animal health responsibilities, the Scottish Executive will ensure that Scottish stakeholders are kept informed about the risk of disease outbreaks and scientific developments and will work with them to ensure that changes in farming practice are reflected in future policy.

56. An Information Management system is being developed to capture data on new disease outbreaks in livestock around the world. This will be linked to a GIS (Geographical Information System) facility to map the emerging threats and inform policy directions.

UK Surveillance

LL R67: We recommend that in developing the surveillance strategy, there be the widest possible involvement of those with a role to play in surveillance. (p160)

LL R66: The State Veterinary Service, together with the Pirbright Laboratory, should increase their horizon scanning and threat assessment capabilities for major infectious animal diseases. (p160)

57. The Scottish Executive supports these recommendations and is participating in the development of a UK veterinary surveillance strategy. The surveillance strategy recognises the importance of strengthening links between those involved in the delivery of surveillance and will prioritise horizon scanning for new or changing disease threats. The strategy will involve working in close partnership with the national reference laboratory at IAH Pirbright.

58. The strategy aims to integrate currently held animal disease data with other relevant population, geographic and meteorological data. An integrated database will also support serosurveillance programmes designed to demonstrate freedom from disease.

3d. REDUCING VULNERABILITY

LEGISLATION

59. The Scottish Executive has both primary and secondary legislative powers to support its animal health and welfare objectives. Much of this is heavily influenced by EU legislation which it is incumbent upon the Scottish Executive to implement. In terms of FMD the current rules set out in Council Directive 85/511 require a stamping out policy. The European Commission will shortly publish its proposals to revise the existing FMD Directive and the Scottish Executive will be contributing to its drafting via a Council Working Group.

60. Reflecting such commitments the Animal Health Act 1981 and related secondary legislation gives Scottish Ministers the broad powers to deal with the FMD outbreak. These powers were used to implement the disease control strategy of culling animals on infected premises and dangerous contacts (i.e. animals suspected of being infected, animals which had been in contact with infected animals or those believed to have been exposed to the FMD virus).

LL R77: We recommend that the powers available in the Animal Health Act 1981 be re-examined, possibly in the context of a wider review of animal health legislation, to remove any ambiguity over the legal basis for future disease control strategies. (p163)

LL R38: We recommend that provision be made for the possible application of pre-emptive culling policies, if justified by well informed veterinary and scientific advice, and judged to be appropriate to the circumstances. (p99)

61. Dr Anderson considers that there are ambiguities with regard to the current legislation. The existing legislation is being reviewed with the aim of clarifying the legal interpretation of some powers, for example the right to enter premises. The opportunity is also being taken to examine existing legislation in the context of increased awareness of disease risks. The Scottish Executive hopes to consult shortly on proposed new animal health legislation.

MOVEMENT CONTROLS

62. A key aspect of the Royal Society report is the recommendation that animal movements should be reduced to a minimum. This recommendation is founded on the observation that animal movements were an important vector in transmitting the FMD virus in 2001. The Scottish Executive endorses the position that movements must be reduced and is working with the industry to address the issue. The current position is reflected by a ban on market to market movements and a 20-day movement standstill.

63. The current interim movement regime has the aim of reducing the spread of disease. Should an infected animal move onto a farm, the 20-day period allows time for detection to occur before the animal, or others it may have affected, moves off the farm. It thus increases the probability of detection and reduces the potential for disease spread.

RS 5.3: DEFRA should investigate all the issues connected with reducing animal movements and come forward with practicable solutions that strike the right balance between the legitimate interests of livestock owners, market systems and long-term disease control. (p54)

LL R78: We recommend that the Government retain the 20 day movement restrictions pending a detailed risk assessment and wide ranging cost-benefit analysis. (p164)

64. The movement regime does impact on livestock farming systems by limiting the flexibility of herd/flock management. This is particularly true in Scotland given that the highly stratified nature of the livestock sector requires a significant number of movements at certain times of the year, particularly Autumn and Spring. Reflecting the importance of a movement regime in minimising disease risks and equally maintaining the commercial livestock sector, research has been commissioned to assess the veterinary risks and associated costs and benefits of different options that achieve a balance between effective control and the continuation of reasonable movements by commercial livestock farmers.

65. This research has been commissioned on a GB basis but will consider the distinctive Scottish livestock sector and the system of separation within the current 20-day regime which is able to provide - subject to specific biosecurity conditions - exemption from the whole farm standstill. Once completed the research will be used as the basis for stakeholder discussions and the development of a permanent movement regime. Whilst research has been commissioned on a GB basis, the future regime will be determined by Scottish Ministers and will reflect Scottish circumstances.

At Time of Disease Outbreak

RSE 5: A complete ban on movement of susceptible animals throughout the country must be imposed immediately an FMD case is confirmed. This may be speedily relaxed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, including rural businesses, once the source of the disease is traced. (para 74)

66. The draft contingency plan states that in the eventuality of a future disease outbreak a national movement ban on susceptible animals will be introduced immediately on confirmation of disease. This will be relaxed as soon as possible on the basis of veterinary advice. As the RSE suggests, the identification of the source case will be a key factor in this decision.

INDUSTRY PRACTICE

67. The industry has an important role to play in minimising future outbreaks. Whilst they have played a leading role so far, it will be important that standards continue to be raised and do not slip as the memory of 2001 fades.

Pigswill

LL R15: We recommend that the UK prohibition of swill feeding of catering waste containing meat products continue. The UK should continue to support a ban at EU level. (p49)

68. The Scottish Executive supports this recommendation and notes that it has already been implemented in the UK. An EU Regulation banning swill feeding in the EU has been approved.

Animal Identification

LL R79: We recommend that Government develop a comprehensive livestock tracing system using electronic tags to cover cattle, sheep and pigs taking account of developments at EU level. The Government should seek to lead the debate in Europe on this issue. (p164)

69. The importance of a reliable means of identifying and tracing animals was recognised during the 2001 outbreak. The Scottish Executive agrees with the principle of traceability and that fully electronic identification and traceability systems are the way forward and has undertaken significant work in this area. A joint SEERAD/Industry project was established in March 2000 to look at the introduction of electronic identification (EID) and use of electronic data transfer (EDT) to enhance the existing cattle traceability system. Key EDT elements have already been introduced to speed up the reporting of births, movements and deaths of cattle with built in pre-validation to reduce the opportunity for error. The next stage of the project is now underway to encourage widespread use of EDT. The project has also been assessing the performance of current EID technology against industry and legislative requirements and it is clear that technological advancements are required before implementation across the whole production chain is possible. Work is on-going with EID manufacturers to encourage further development. The views of the EU are also important as indications are that there will be EU-wide standards for EID technology used for animal ID and traceability. This will ensure compatibility of systems to encourage international trade.

70. The Scottish Executive made the decision that traceability was of such importance to the Scottish sheep industry that rather than wait for the development of suitable technology, interim measures were necessary to improve the tracing of sheep, pigs and goats. The sheep and goat system introduced in February 2002 includes the baseline tagging or tattooing of all animals, standard movement documents, the insertion of movement tags to cover specific moves, and reporting of batch movements to the Scottish Animal Movement Unit (SAMU). A similar system operates for pigs with the exception of the tagging and tattooing requirements.

BIOSECURITY

71. Biosecurity is about taking action to reduce the risk of disease occurring or spreading to other animals. It is an activity that is principally the responsibility of the livestock keepers, but attention is also required from others who come into contact with livestock. There is also an important role for the Scottish Executive in helping to disseminate good practice and help the livestock industry to enhance their practice of biosecurity measures. As such the Executive is very supportive of the key inquiry recommendations and has been working on this issue with the industry.

LL R61: We recommend that the livestock industry and government jointly develop codes of practice on biosecurity. They should explore ways to communicate effectively with all practitioners and how incentives might be used to raise standards. (p150)

72. In March 2002 a draft Biosecurity Code of Practice was issued for wide stakeholder consultation. Over 600 representative organisations were targeted to ensure that the Code was being developed in a way that was user friendly and would ensure that the advice - driven heavily by veterinary input - would be capable of exerting a positive influence on biosecurity practice. On the basis of responses and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders the Code was revised and is in the process of receiving Scottish Parliamentary approval as a statutory Code of Practice.

73. The publication of the Code and Parliamentary approval will not be the end of the story. It is important that the biosecurity message does not fade with the memory of the 2001 outbreak and a number of pieces of work are underway to keep the agenda moving. In particular:

- SAC has been commissioned to promote biosecurity advice
- a biosecurity website has been developed
- SEERAD is working with SAC and others to develop a biosecurity training module for use in agricultural related higher and further education courses as well as in Continuing Professional Development.

Biosecurity in Disease Situation

RSE 13: SEERAD should prepare and keep in readiness up-to-date factsheets on biosecurity to be issued to all concerned at the start of an outbreak. Every effort should also be made to ensure that standards of biosecurity, even in normal times, are raised so as to minimise the risk of any infection spreading. (para 143)

74. The Biosecurity Code is designed for use in normal times and gives advice on reducing disease risks. However, as the RSE recognises, heightened levels of biosecurity will be required in times of disease outbreaks and the draft Scottish FMD Contingency Plan includes further biosecurity advice during a disease situation. This will be available on the Scottish Executive's Biosecurity Website and this guidance will also be posted to Scottish livestock keepers in the event of a future outbreak.

75. Recognising that biosecurity is not only the responsibility of the livestock keeper the Biosecurity Code also includes guidance to other users of farm land - e.g. walkers - and SEERAD will be working with Scottish Natural Heritage and the Access Forum to ensure that biosecurity issues will be fully reflected in the forthcoming development of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Quality Assurance

LL R76: We recommend that the livestock industry work with Government to undertake a thorough review of the assurance and licensing options to identify those arrangements most likely to reward good practice and take-up of training, and how such a new system might be implemented. (p162)

LL R75: We recommend that farm assurance schemes take account of animal health and welfare, biosecurity, food safety and environmental issues. (p162)

76. In taking forward the Biosecurity Code of Practice, the Scottish Executive has been working closely with those responsible for the main livestock Quality Assurance Schemes. This has ensured that consistent messages have been sent to the industry and that as many linkages are being exploited as possible. Whilst Quality Assurance schemes are an industry responsibility, the Executive has worked with Quality Meat Scotland to include biosecurity aspects in the annual inspection. Quality Meat Scotland has also contracted its certification body, Scottish Food Quality Certification Ltd., to undertake a fundamental review (part funded by SEERAD) of the standards and procedures for all Specially Selected Scotch assurance schemes. This will include animal health, welfare and farm biosecurity issues.

RS 5.4: DEFRA should ensure that all keepers of livestock (including that not kept for food production) are properly registered and submit to DEFRA each year the name of their nominated private veterinary surgeon and a health plan approved by the same veterinary surgeon. (p54)

77. The Scottish Executive recognises that any individual animal of a susceptible species, even one kept as a pet, is vulnerable to epidemic disease. It prefers, however, a less prescriptive approach from that indicated in this recommendation and believes that the highest priority in biosecurity is for all livestock keepers to consult regularly with their veterinary surgeon and develop, with him/her, a health plan appropriate to the individual circumstances. Such good practice is recommended in the Biosecurity Code.

TRAINING

78. Training is an important issue to help both minimise the risk of disease outbreaks and to assist preparedness. It is also good practice and the Scottish Executive is currently undertaking a review of training and education for the farming industry.

LL R60: We recommend that farmers, vets and others involved in the livestock industry have access to training in biosecurity measures. Such training should form an integral part of courses at agricultural colleges. (p148)

LL R72: We recommend that colleges, universities and training organisations provide courses to equip those working in the food and livestock industries, and those owning susceptible animals, with the skills and knowledge to enable them to recognise the signs of animal disease early and take appropriate action to prevent its spread. (p161)

RS R10.5: DEFRA should take rapid action to investigate and improve:

- the continuous professional development of farmers and stock keepers;
- postgraduate training in livestock health and welfare;
- the attractiveness of careers within the SVS
- the training of TVIs and LVIs by DEFRA, with the RCVS, the BVA and its species divisions, investigating the feasibility of the BCVA proposals. (p138)

79. To complement the publication of the Biosecurity Code of Practice the Scottish Executive is developing a training module which could be used by further and higher education courses as well as continuing professional development courses. In addition to this work with the industry the Scottish Executive has also included biosecurity as a core element for the induction training of Agricultural Officers. The role of private veterinary surgeons in an emergency is being re-evaluated. Improved training for Local Veterinary Inspectors in emergency situations will be part of this process.

LL R73: We recommend that DEFRA commission a handbook for farmers on identifying and responding to animal disease, drawing on the experience of 2001. (p162)

80. As part of the programme of biosecurity advice to farmers the Scottish Executive has developed a website which includes practical advice on identifying clinical signs of disease. It also provides contact details for reporting notifiable diseases and generally recommends a regular dialogue with their veterinary surgeon.

Veterinary Education

LL R68: We recommend that DEFRA and the Department for Education and Skills jointly explore with the veterinary professional bodies and higher education institutions the scope for increasing the capacity of undergraduate and postgraduate veterinary provision. Equivalent work should be done in Scotland. (p160)

81. There is currently no significant shortage in the number of veterinary graduates. However, there is an issue with regard to their post-university career path, particularly in terms of numbers willing to work in large animal practices and research. The Scottish Executive, Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, DEFRA and the Higher Education Funding Council for England are currently working with the RCVS and the Wellcome Trust to develop a Strategic Alliance to enhance the numbers of researchers actively engaged in clinical veterinary education. This will have further benefits by exposing veterinary undergraduates to a research rich environment.

LL R71: We recommend that Government support a national action group charged with the responsibility of producing a plan to tackle the gaps in practitioners' knowledge of preventing and managing infectious diseases of livestock. To be effective this will need a timetable, milestones for achievement and incentives. (p161)

LL R74: We recommend that training for Local Veterinary Inspectors in exotic diseases be intensified, and consolidated into ongoing training strategies. (p162)

82. The SVS is seeking to improve the training of Local Veterinary Inspectors and their use in emergency situations. In addition the SVS is actively looking at ways of involving veterinary surgeons from other areas of employment (e.g. veterinary colleges, industry, and other parts of Government) with its work, with the aim of having joint training initiatives which, as well as developing expertise on both sides, would provide a nucleus of reserve veterinary surgeons during an emergency. SVS staff in Scotland will continue to provide training in State Veterinary Medicine for undergraduates in the Edinburgh and Glasgow veterinary schools. This covers notifiable diseases and animal welfare.

SCIENTIFIC ADVICE

LL R34: We recommend that DEFRA's Chief Scientist maintain a properly constituted committee ready to advise in an emergency on scientific aspects of disease control. The role of this group should include advising on horizon scanning and emerging risks. Particular attention should be given to the recommendations on the use of scientific advisory committees in the BSE inquiry report of 2000. (p91)

83. Scientific advice during an emergency is central to the decision making process for determining disease control options. In terms of infectious diseases, GB is a single epidemiological unit, and therefore the underlying science will be consistent across GB. However, animal health and welfare are the responsibility of Scottish Ministers, and the Executive will ensure that this constitutional position and the unique aspects of Scottish farming and geography are thoroughly accounted for when advice is sought. The Executive will therefore establish sound lines of communication with the Scientific Advisory Council proposed by DEFRA to provide scientific advice. This will be an advisory NDPB made up of senior and external scientists to guide DEFRA's Chief Scientific Adviser on the scope, balance and direction of the scientific effort in animal health and welfare. The Scottish Executive will take account of this advice in conjunction with advice from its professional scientific advisers and will work with, and seek advice from, relevant scientific communities in Scotland when it is appropriate to do so.

RESEARCH

84. The major part of funding for research on exotic pathogens in the UK comes from DEFRA and the BBSRC. Most of this funding is directed to the centralised specialist containment facilities at the Institute for Animal Health's Pirbright Laboratory. This is appropriate given that it minimises the risk to UK livestock and concentrates valuable expertise in one location. SEERAD's own research funding is guided by its Strategy for Agricultural, Biological and Related Research 1999-2003. Development of a new strategy will commence shortly and during this there will be considerable opportunity for other funders of animal health research to comment on the direction and co-ordination of research.

RS R10.1: The Government should undertake a thorough overhaul of research into animal disease, and in particular develop a national strategy for research in animal disease and surveillance. (p136)

RS R10.3: The Government should create a virtual National Centre for Animal Disease Research and Surveillance, the Board of which would be responsible for delivering the National Strategy. (p136)

LL R65: We recommend that the Pirbright Laboratory resources, and research programmes, be integrated into the national strategy for animal disease control, and budget provisions be made accordingly. (p159)

85. The Animal Health and Welfare Strategy will identify high level/strategic research priorities for exotic and endemic diseases and will engage with a wide variety of interests in its development. The Scottish Executive is engaging in discussions with other administrations and with funding bodies to ensure that the model for delivery of this research is appropriate in form for the research needs identified by the Strategy, and efficient in its use of expensive facilities.

RSE 10: SEERAD should foster and co-ordinate the available expertise in prevention and control of animal disease in Scotland in conjunction with SHEFC and the NHS. A good starting point would be an audit of available high containment facilities where FMD research could safely be undertaken. (para 128)

86. The Scottish Executive already has good links with the Scottish schools of veterinary medicine, with the Moredun Research Institute and the SAC, the latter two being the main SEERAD-funded organisations carrying out animal health research, and will continue to use this intellectual resource as appropriate in the future. An audit of containment facilities in Scotland was undertaken during the 2001 outbreak, building on the provisions of the Specified Animal Pathogens Order 1990 which licenses laboratories to hold pathogens.

87. Staff from the SVS in Scotland maintain close liaison with UK-wide bodies which monitor the effects of animal and human health: the UK Zoonosis Group, the Surveillance Group for Diseases and Infection of Animals and the UK Advisory Committee for Microbiological Safety of Food. These bodies are UK-wide, reflecting the relevance of their work to all parts of the United Kingdom and their membership covers a wide range of disciplines.

Funding

RS 10.4: The Government should increase investment in animal disease research and development by the order of £250M over the next 10 years. (p136)

RS 10.2: The Government should draw together the current research funding in infectious diseases of animals (both endemic and exotic) within England into a single joint arrangement, the funds being made available to implement the national strategy; (p136).

88. The Scottish Executive component of GB animal health research funding amounts to £5.4M in 2002/03. This represents around 12% of research spend by SEERAD's Agricultural and Biological Research Group. The majority of this is provided as core, grant-in-aid funding to the Moredun Research Institute and the SAC. DEFRA manages the majority of funding for Animal Health research on a GB-wide basis, of the order of £37.6m in 2001/02 rising to £38.4m in 2003/04.m pa). Any increase in funding for Animal Health Research is likely to come from this source via the outcome of SR2002.

89. The Executive will consider carefully, in consultation with DEFRA and BBSRC, the implications for animal health research in Scotland, of a single joint funding arrangement for endemic and exotic diseases. There are important consequences in this for Scottish Institutes that have a strong track record in research on endemic diseases but limited access to funding from sources other than SEERAD.

Research into Livestock Sector

RS 5.5: DEFRA should establish an Applied Research Unit on Livestock Management Practices that will undertake or commission research leading to
(i) the design of effective biosecurity measures against infectious animal diseases, and
(ii) the design of livestock management structures and practices that improve animal health in terms of infectious diseases. (p55)

90. The Scottish Executive acknowledges the role that husbandry, management and farming systems can play in the prevention and control of endemic and exotic diseases. The development of SEERAD's Biosecurity Code of Practice can be seen as a symbol of the Executive's commitment to enhancing the level of attention given to biosecurity practices. Research may be commissioned as part of the programme of work to support the development of better biosecurity.

91. The Scottish Executive continues to fund research into livestock management practices through its Agricultural and Biological Research Funding Programme. This includes research into and promotion of biosecurity, veterinary surveillance and advisory services, and decision support tools. An important element is the effect of management practices on disease status.

Specific research areas: modelling

RS R6.3: DEFRA should undertake a major research programme into the potential of mathematical modelling for understanding the quantitative aspects of animal disease. Mathematical models can be used both in preparing for outbreaks (including evaluating alternative strategies) and during the course of controlling an epidemic. (p72)

92. The Scottish Executive accepts that quantitative modelling is a valuable tool. Both its power and its acceptance would be increased if existing models were to be refined and the methodology demonstrated to the wider scientific community and public. Scottish Executive officials attended the DEFRA workshop on mathematical modelling in June 2002. This also involved representatives from Government funded Institutes, Universities and the SVS. SEERAD will be involved in developing research requirements for mathematical modelling although funding for a major research programme in this area would rest with DEFRA.

RS R3.3: DEFRA should carry out urgent research into local transmission of FMD that will improve biosecurity in the field. (p35)

RSE 9: Further analysis of the role of sheep, cattle and pigs in the 2001 outbreak should be undertaken and the results published. Further studies on factors influencing the spread and survival of FMD virus strains are also required. (para 125)

93. Biosecurity is a vital component in reducing the vulnerability of the livestock sector to disease incursion and GB-wide studies are currently being undertaken concerning the methods of local spread and the susceptible stock involved. A comprehensive epidemiological analysis of the outbreak is well advanced and will address the role of species and behaviour of the virus. The Scottish Executive is involved in taking this work forward and will ensure that the results are used to inform policy.

RS R6.2: DEFRA should commission research to improve the methodology used to identify dangerous contacts. (p72)

94. As noted in paragraph 82 above, a major review will shortly be undertaken of animal health and welfare research needed to support the development of the Animal Health and Welfare strategy. This recommendation will be taken forward in this context.

INFORMATION

95. The Scottish Executive acknowledges that IT was not used in a seamless fashion during the FMD outbreak although the Lessons Learned Inquiry indicated that effective use of our computer systems and links was a factor in our relative success. There was, however, incompatibility between the main systems used by the SVS and SEERAD, and some databases and spreadsheets which had been designed for non-emergency situations proved unequal to the demands placed on them. These problems were identified in the internal management review undertaken for the Scottish Executive and work is in hand to rectify them. The improvement of management information systems for veterinary matters and disease control will be overseen by the SVS Management Board.

LL R20: We recommend that DEFRA lay out milestones for investment and achievement for improved management information systems. (p73)

LL R21: We recommend that data capture and management information systems be kept up to date and reflect the best practice.(p73)

LL R23: We recommend that standard definitions of all important parameters of information be agreed in advance. (p73)

96. The overall approach taken by the Scottish Executive will be to link databases as far as possible so that any applications can have access to a seamless integrated set of data. Standard definitions of all types of input information will be vital to this process. It is also important that data quality is maintained; information relevant to agricultural matters, such as holdings data and animal census information, can change rapidly. The Executive accepts Dr Anderson's recommendation on data capture and is currently working to ensure that there are effective links between its main databases and the SVS system, Vetnet.

RS 3.2: DEFRA should undertake a comprehensive review of the available information on FMD and develop a consistent and coherent database of the basic information that would be required during an outbreak. (p35)

LL R5: We recommend that the Government build an up to date database of livestock, farming and marketing practices. This should include research to examine the evolution of regional livestock stocking densities and implications for disease risk control. (p30)

97. The Scottish Executive fully accepts that a coherent central database, including not only disease control data but also livestock, farm business and geographical data would be of great value in supporting a wide range of functions. Work is going on in Scotland to harmonise different sources of data and create linkages to existing databases.

LL R18: We recommend that use be made of alternative sources of information and intelligence during crises. (p71)

98. The Scottish Executive accepts that a wide range of sources of information would be of value in a disease emergency. The Contingency Plan provides for stakeholder input across the board and envisages that detailed local information would be channelled to the disease control effort via links with local stakeholders.

LL R19: We recommend that DEFRA's Geographical Information System and the Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) be designed so that they can be used more effectively for disease control purposes. (p72)

RSE 6: An appropriate GIS system should be established detailing land use, livestock numbers and other information relevant to disease control. Furthermore uniform standards in database design and data handling protocols should be established. (para 94)

99. Experience during the outbreak has confirmed the Scottish Executive's view that a Geographical Information System and its associated mapping capabilities is an invaluable tool for all levels of decision making. Work on developing and accessing an effective GIS for disease control purposes across GB is ongoing and the Scottish Executive is closely involved with this. In parallel, the Executive recognises that locational data is intrinsic to many of its functions and is progressing a Scotland-wide GIS strategy to support work across areas of devolved responsibility.

RS R6.4: DEFRA should ensure that the data from the 2001 epidemic are checked and then made widely available, while ensuring that any data protection issues are resolved. (p72)

100. The Executive therefore accepts these recommendations and will be playing its part in implementing them. However, data protection issues arising from the EU IACS regulation and from the Data Protection Act (DPA) are a barrier to rapid implementation. IACS data has been collected for subsidy purposes, and not for disease control reasons. During the outbreak these issues were overcome because the wording of the EU legislation allowed that to happen, but there are concerns that to use IACS data during non-disease periods would not respect the data protection conditions. This issue is currently being taken forward.

3d. MINIMISING IMPACT

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

101. Contingency Planning was a key theme of the Inquiries' reports. The Lessons to be Learned report acknowledged that there was considerable experience in Scotland at the local level of animal health contingency planning. Each Animal Health Divisional Office had its own plans which were regularly rehearsed. It was expected that on average in any 2 year period each Division would have undertaken its own rehearsal involving key local public sector organisations - e.g. police, local authorities, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA.)

102. Whilst those plans were broadly effective in assisting the Scottish response, the Executive's evidence to the Lessons Learned Inquiry also made clear that there was much more that could be done for the future - particularly in terms of developing a contingency plan and increasing stakeholder involvement. Work in these areas is ongoing. The Scottish Executive published a draft contingency plan in June 2002 and the responses to the 3 month consultation exercise are currently being taken on board - in parallel with a series of stakeholder discussions. Local plans are also being revised and these will be taken to stakeholder consultation in each of the Animal Health Divisions.

Overall Policy Direction

LL R81: We recommend that DEFRA develop further its Interim plan, published in March 2002, in full consultation with all interested parties. Its relevance should be maintained through agreed programmes of rehearsal, practice, review and reporting. This work should be given priority for funding. (p165)

RS 9.4: The detailed strategies for controlling outbreaks of livestock diseases should be included in the published contingency plan, which should consist of an umbrella plan for matters that are common to all diseases, with specific modules for each disease. These plans should be rehearsed in an annual "fire drill" that must be realistic and involve DEFRA and all other relevant bodies including MoD. (p125)

103. The Scottish Executive is continuing to develop its contingency plan, fulfilling its responsibility for emergency planning and preparedness. It is currently being revised in the light of stakeholder comments and the Inquiry Reports and a revised Plan will be published towards the end of the year. Whilst aiming to keep the plan focused and suitable to its purposes of guiding action in an emergency situation it will include as much information as possible to alert people as to what will happen in a disease situation – e.g. introduction of a movement ban.

Rehearsals

RSE 23: At least once a year a practice exercise should be undertaken at which there is a mock outbreak at a site not revealed until the start of the exercise. This would require all those involved to act as they would in a real outbreak as a means of testing their effectiveness and the suitability of the organisational structure. (para 216)

RSE 26: The Scottish Executive should review the emergency plans of all Scottish Councils to ensure that they adequately cover the action required in the event of an FMD outbreak; and all Councils should up-date their plans if that has not already been done. Such plans should be reviewed annually in the light of developments in science and consequential changes in policy. (para 224)

104. The Scottish Executive fully supports the view that regular rehearsals are important. This ensures a familiarity between key players which can be vital in any 'real' response. They are equally important in identifying practical problems and ensuring they are resolved.

105. Before the contingency plan is finalised, a programme of rehearsals at the national and local level will be developed, allowing stakeholder views to be fed into the national and local plans and allow organisations such as local authorities to revise their own plans. The first exercise will be conducted in 2003. These rehearsals will take place in the wider context of emergency preparedness exercises undertaken by local authorities, the Emergency Services and other operational partners such as the emergency services. Dr Anderson highlighted this background and awareness as a distinctive factor in supporting the effective Scottish response to the 2001 outbreak.

Blue Box

LL R62: We recommend that the use of Restricted Infected Area ('Blue Box' biosecurity arrangements) procedures be built into contingency plans. (p160)

106. The Scottish Executive supports the adoption of a "Blue Box" approach in the event of a future disease outbreak. The Blue Box would introduce a heightened set of biosecurity conditions in an area around an infected premise. It would require increased levels of cleansing and disinfection on all movements on and off farm as well as through the area. It would also close the parts of footpaths that fall in the immediate area. An evaluation of the scheme showed that it was effective in reducing the risk of mechanical spread of the FMD virus. The Blue Box will be a core component of any future response and the Executive is currently discussing its implementation with stakeholders.

Training

LL R43: We recommend that training for those with responsibility for managing disease control include the relevant legal frameworks and the structure and responsibilities of local government. (p112)

107. The Scottish Executive fully accepts that training is fundamental to an efficient disease response. In Scotland, regular two-way training with the SVS and local authority staff has been a longstanding practice and has ensured an effective joint approach to animal disease control. The Scottish Executive will also be developing a training programme for key non-veterinary disease control managers to allow them to fulfil their duties.

Reporting

RS 1.1: The UK Government should bring before Parliament for debate a framework for the Contingency Plans covering the principles involved in handling outbreaks of infectious exotic diseases and the resources required for their implementation. (p1)

LL R11: We recommend that the government publish a biennial report to the nation on the level of preparedness to tackle animal disease emergencies. The first report should be published in 2003 and include measures of achievement against goals. (p39)

RSE 27: To ensure that contingency planning at all levels is kept up-to-date and takes account of the latest developments, the Minister in the Scottish Executive with responsibility for animal health, should establish an independent standing committee to monitor this work and to assess the effectiveness of mock exercises. (para 225)

108. The Scottish Executive accepts the principle of these recommendations and will ensure that the results of the disease surveillance programme are adequately disseminated to the industry. In particular, an annual report on the international and the GB disease position will be made to the Animal Health and Welfare stakeholder group.

109. It is imperative that the contingency plan is kept as a living document. In process terms the Animal Health Division will be responsible for regularly reviewing the finalised plan and ensuring that it is kept up to date in terms of key changes in the external environment - e.g. personnel changes; changes in legislation or environmental risk assessments as well as industry practice.

110. Any such changes will be reported to the Department's Animal Health and Welfare stakeholder group who will also review the plan at least once a year. The report will also be sent to the Scottish Parliament's Rural Development Committee and be placed on the Executive's website. In addition to reporting any key changes affecting the plan, the Scottish Executive will also report back on the conduct of regular contingency planning exercises.

Scenario Planning

LL R6: We recommend that contingency plans set out procedures to be followed in the event that an emergency expands beyond worst-case expectations. (p36)

111. Work is being taken forward to identify possible disease scenarios. This will be informed by the analysis being undertaken on movement controls. The scenarios developed will be published.

Resources

LL 10: We recommend that Government Departments ensure that their own internal Departmental arrangements properly resource contingency planning work. This should be monitored by the National Audit Office. (p39)

112. The Scottish Executive fully endorses the comments from Dr Anderson that a contingency plan must be capable of being delivered and will ensure that these principles are reflected in its development of emergency preparedness. The Scottish Executive is considering carefully the resources needed at all stages of the Plan. This will be influenced by the scenario planning work and especially the needs of the worst case scenario. The deliverability of the plan will also be regularly tested – at both national and local levels – by regular rehearsals. Resourcing issues will be considered on a regular basis to reflect organisational and other changes and will be included in the annual report to the Animal Health and Welfare Stakeholder Group.

COMMUNICATIONS

113. Communications is an area in which the Scottish Executive considers significant improvements could take place. Communicating in a disease situation is not straightforward, with a number of particular interest groups needing to be informed in what is often a rapidly changing environment.

A Strategy for Communications

RSE 25: A comprehensive review should be undertaken into the most effective means of communication to those concerned in the event of an outbreak and the appropriate mechanisms incorporated in the Scottish contingency plan. (para 221)

LL R54: We recommend that a government-wide crisis communication strategy be developed by the Civil Contingencies Secretariat with specific plans being prepared at departmental level; for example by DEFRA and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales in the context of animal disease control. (p142)

LL R57: We recommend that DEFRA commission research into the effectiveness of its direct communications during the FMD outbreak of 2001 so that all the lessons may be learned, acted upon and the results published. (p144)

114. The Executive accepts that communication is a particular area where improvements can be made. Building on the experience of 2001 and the spirit of these recommendations, the Executive is commissioning a communications specialist to produce a communications strategy to assess the needs of individual stakeholders and the capabilities of resources. Stakeholders will be involved in the development of the Communications Strategy, which will be published alongside the Contingency Plan. It will be kept under review.

Communications Resource

LL R53: We recommend that the government build into contingency plans the capacity to scale up communications systems and resources rapidly at the onset of any future outbreak of animal disease. (p142)

115. The importance of being able to scale up the communications resource at the earliest opportunity is acknowledged. The draft contingency plan identifies that members of the Scottish Executive's Press Office will be dedicated to supporting the disease control response at both headquarters and local level. This will be reviewed in the light of the externally developed communications strategy.

Website

LL R56: We recommend that DEFRA resource its website to ensure that it is state of the art operation. In any future outbreak, the website should be used extensively, and a central priority should be to ensure that it contains timely and up to date information at a national and local level. (p144)

116. The Scottish Executive accepts the principle behind this recommendation and will be further developing its own systems. The corporate website used by the Scottish Executive (www.scotland.gov.uk) is a further point on which there is significant scope for improvement. This is being reviewed as part of the Executive's plans to improve access to information by overhauling the structure and content of its website. The communications strategy research will also consider how it could be most effectively be used in any future disease situation.

International Media

LL R59: We recommend that communications strategies during a crisis take special account of the needs of the International media. (p147)

117. The international media paid considerable attention to the outbreak and this had a significant effect on influencing a number of potential visitors against coming to Great Britain. As such the Scottish Executive accepts this recommendation and will work alongside other Administrations and agencies – e.g. British Tourism Authority, [visitscotland](http://visitscotland.com) – to ensure that an accurate picture of events is received outside, as well as within, the country.

Keeping Stakeholders Informed

LL R37: We recommend that in order to build support steps always be taken to explain the rationale of policies on the ground, particularly where implementation is likely to be controversial. Wherever possible, local circumstances should be taken into account without undermining the overall strategy. (p98)

LL R50: We recommend that government make explicit the extent to which the wider effects of disease control strategies have been identified, measured and taken into account in policy decisions. (p137)

118. This recommendation is accepted and should be set alongside general issues relating to keeping stakeholders informed. The draft Contingency Plan explains that stakeholder groups will be set up to facilitate a two-way dialogue between the Scottish Executive and the industry. Such communication was vital in 2001 in delivering the effective partnership which characterised the Scottish response (and was highlighted by the Lessons to be Learned report).

INSTANT RESPONSE

119. The inquiries were unanimous in stressing the importance of an immediate response to the outbreak to prevent it turning into an epidemic. As such the Scottish Contingency Plan is designed to scale up resources sooner rather than later.

RS R9.1: The main objective in dealing with an outbreak must be to ensure that it does not develop into an epidemic. This requires the following basic measures:

on suspicion of an outbreak:

- immediate imposition of strict local movement restrictions and biosecurity measures including culling the animal with clinical signs;

on confirmation by an OIE Reference laboratory of an outbreak:

- mobilisation of the full emergency arrangements including all the additional logistic resources and the interdepartmental co-ordination and scientific advisory structure;
- imposition of a total country-wide ban on animal movement with unambiguous and widely publicised advice on the fate of any animals in transit;
- rapid culling of all infected premises;
- identification and rapid culling of all premises where there is a high risk of the disease

Where these measures are insufficient to guarantee that the outbreak will be contained, we recommend in addition the early deployment of emergency vaccination. (p125)

LL R16: We recommend that in all suspected cases of FMD, the response reflect the experience of the emergency services, where speed and urgency of action govern decision making. (p61)

LL R33: We recommend that contingency plans provide for early appointment of regional Operations Directors or their equivalent to take on operational management of a crisis. There should be a cadre of senior managers – not all of whom need to come from central government – who can fulfil the role of the Regional Operations Director in an emergency and who should be trained in advance. (p87)

120. The draft Scottish Contingency plan addresses the key issues identified by the Royal Society. As soon as samples from a suspect case are sent away for confirmation, the Disease Strategy Group will be created to advise the Minister for Environment and Rural Development on the Scottish Executive's response. In particular the DSG will ensure that appropriate legislation to introduce a movement ban and the Blue Box is ready to be used. In addition they will ensure that the Regional Operations Director is sent to the affected Animal Health Divisional Office to support the local Divisional Veterinary Manager. The Scottish Executive agrees that those who can fulfil the role of Regional Operations Director should be identified and trained in advance; and it has this in hand.

Mobilising Wider Resources

LL R39: We recommend that a mechanism be put in place at the centre of Government to assess potential domestic civil threats and emergencies and provide advice to the Prime Minister on when to trigger the wider response of Government. (p102)

LL R8: We recommend that DEFRA develop its human resources plans for use in emergency. In particular they should focus on how staff numbers and expertise can be rapidly increased at a time of crisis. This should be developed in England in consultation with the Cabinet Office, the regional Co-ordination unit and the network of Government Offices. Similar arrangements should be developed in Scotland and Wales. (p36)

LL 30: We recommend that, as part of its contingency planning, DEFRA, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly for Wales, working with the Civil Contingencies Secretariat, examine the practicality of establishing a national volunteer reserve trained and informed to respond immediately to an outbreak of Infectious animal disease. (p82)

121. The Executive's internal management review recommended that the Scottish Executive develop an emergency cadre of staff who could be deployed to an emergency situation to support existing staff in that area. The Management Group of the Scottish Executive strongly supports the development of such a cadre and this work is currently being taken forward. In doing so, the Executive will maintain close contact with the Cabinet Office Civil Contingency Secretariat, which is undertaking similar work for the UK government, to ensure the exchange of best practice.

LL R7: We recommend that provision be made in contingency plans for rapid prioritisation of a Department's work in the face of a crisis, and for speedy reassignment of resources. (p36)

122. This recommendation is accepted. The ability of individual parts of the organisation to release staff will vary across the year. Reflecting this, in the eventuality of a requirement to initiate the emergency cadre of staff, the relevant head of department will discuss requirements with his Management Group colleagues who will identify staff who can be released from their area.

LL R17: We recommend that the State Veterinary Service consider forming a National network of 'flying squad' teams capable of responding to an alert. The continuing occurrence of false alarms can then be used constructively to maintain readiness and to practise routines. (p61)

123. The national and local contingency plans set out a clear list of roles and responsibilities for those involved in responding to a suspect case. As Dr Anderson notes experience is a valuable learning tool and any learning opportunities from false alarms will be taken forward. This has already happened from a small number of scares in 2002 and as a consequence, for example, a new system of internal notifications has been developed.

Military Involvement

LL R29: We recommend that, as part of the mechanisms to trigger the wider Government response, the military be consulted at the earliest appropriate opportunity to provide advice and consider the nature of possible support. (p82)

124. The army played an important role in the logistics of the disease control effort in 2001. The draft Contingency Plan, which has been discussed with the army, explains that the army will be notified as soon as a case is confirmed and will be kept in touch with the disease control position in case their input is required. However, no approach will be made to the UK Government to provide military assistance until there is a clear role for them to fulfil.

Local Volunteers

LL R24: We recommend contingency plans at a regional level include mechanisms for making effective use of local voluntary resources. (p74)

125. Local voluntary groups played an important role in supporting the response to the 2001 outbreak, particularly in terms of non-disease control issues such as providing welfare support to those affected. Local contingency plans will outline the roles and responsibilities of posts in the local Disease Emergency Control Centre and the personnel officer will act as a contact point for organisations wishing to offer their services. If not relevant to the direct disease control activity the personnel officer will act as a signpost to where such resources could be used.

DIAGNOSIS

126. During the 2001 outbreak, field vets were faced with a situation of rapidly moving disease. Clinical diagnosis was made more stressful by the knowledge that other conditions could cause similar symptoms, and that a positive diagnosis would trigger measures on contiguous premises and in Scotland, premises within the 3km radius. These pressures were exacerbated by the subclinical nature of symptoms in sheep. Laboratory diagnostic tests, even those based on the ELISA (Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay) technique, took time.

127. The Scottish Executive recognises the pressures on field vets during the epidemic when rapid and accurate diagnosis was needed in order to bring in effective control measures. The Executive therefore welcomes the attention given by all three Inquiries to the issue of how progress in diagnostic techniques can assist the clinician in making a rapid and robust diagnosis and thereby limiting the spread of the disease

LL 36: We recommend that the State Veterinary Service be routinely equipped with the most up-to-date diagnostic tools for use in clinical practice, to contribute to speed and certainty of action at critical times. (p95)

128. The Scottish Executive accepts the recommendation that up to date diagnostic tools should be made available to clinical practitioners. If more rapid and robust diagnostic methods had been available in the 2001 outbreak it would have significantly reduced the burden on vets.

RS 7.5: DEFRA should consider the benefits of bringing responsibility for all list A diseases under a single organisation. (p84)

129. The Scottish Executive will liaise with DEFRA in creating the organisational structure suitable for all list A diseases.

International Co-operation

RS 7.1: DEFRA should consult with other member states to ensure that the OIE is appropriately constituted to validate new diagnostic techniques and reagents as rapidly as possible; and that OIE reference laboratories are supported politically and financially so they can better undertake their national and international obligations, including the development of diagnostic tests. (p84)

130. The Scottish Executive supports the principle of properly resourcing designated national reference laboratories. In the UK this is IAH Pirbright which also acts as an OIE reference laboratory. In terms of ensuring that OIE is in a position to validate new techniques, the Executive would normally contribute to discussions which would form the UK agreed position. EU Member States are members of OIE, and therefore have a mechanism whereby they can contribute to OIE decisions.

New Tests

RS 7.2: DEFRA should ensure that sufficiently specific and sensitive pen-side antigen detection ELISAs are developed for FMD and other major diseases, are validated as quickly as possible, and are available on a large scale for use in the field, and that a similar ELISA is developed especially for detecting antibodies in sheep. (p84)

RS 7.3: DEFRA should explore the potential for portable RT-PCR machines for use in the field or at regional laboratories. (p84)

RS 7.4: DEFRA should develop advanced telecommunications between the field and central control. (p84)

RSE 3: In view of the clear advantages they offer, SEERAD in consultation with DEFRA, Pirbright and interested commercial organisations should as a matter of the highest priority make resources available for the development of improved tests for the detection of FMD, especially RT-PCR; and that they should give similar priority to support the development and evaluation of on-farm tests for the detection of virus or viral components. (para 62)

131. The Scottish Executive agrees that a validated field FMD penside test, which was not available in 2001, would assist in diagnosis. Funding proposals for newer diagnostic techniques, including extended ELISA and RT-PCR, are currently being considered. The Scottish Executive supports this approach.

Scottish Testing Laboratory

RSE 2: SEERAD should identify a regional laboratory in Scotland to undertake diagnosis of FMD using tests where live virus is not required. The latter should remain the responsibility of Pirbright. (para 61)

132. The Scottish Executive accepts that it is desirable to establish a serology laboratory in Scotland equipped to conduct tests on non-live virus samples in contained conditions. Work is already well advanced on this. A new building that will house the laboratory has been constructed at the SAC facility in Dumfries. Preparation of the fitting out of the laboratory and ancillary services, involving SAC and the State Veterinary Service, is under discussion with a view to establishing this laboratory in the current financial year.

VACCINATION

133. Vaccination is a complex subject, with a number of technical, trade, legal and consumer issues needing to be considered. Whilst not used in 2001 it was considered as part of the disease control strategy and is included in the draft Contingency Plan. Reflecting the complexities involved, the Scottish Executive is particularly grateful to the Royal Society for the clear way in which the issues were explained and for setting out a possible path for their resolution.

RS 1.3: The UK should continue to strive for “disease-free” status against highly infectious diseases such as those listed in the OIE’s List A. (p5)

RS 1.4: Providing the level of international threat does not increase; there are improved import controls; and there is a demonstrable improvement in the arrangements for handling disease outbreaks, the UK should not adopt a policy of routine vaccination, and should retain the internationally recognised status of “disease-free without vaccination”. (p6)

134. The Scottish Executive accepts these recommendations and notes that they formed the basis for the disease control strategies invoked in the 2001 outbreak. The Royal Society does, however, raise several important caveats and the need for international surveillance, import controls and contingency planning is discussed in more detail below.

Vaccination and Contingency Planning

RS 8.2: Emergency vaccination should be seen as a major tool of first resort, along with culling of infected premises and known dangerous contacts, for controlling FMD outbreaks. This policy should be vaccinate-to-live, which necessitates acceptance that meat and meat products from vaccinated animals enter the food chain normally. (p105)

LL R48: We recommend that the Government ensure the option of vaccination forms part of any future strategy for the control of FMD. (p129)

LL 49: We recommend that the State Veterinary Service maintain the capability to vaccinate in the event of a future epidemic, if the conditions are right. (p129)

RSE 8.1: That UK contingency planning for future outbreaks of FMD incorporates emergency protective vaccination (ring or barrier) as an adjunct to slaughter of clinical cases and dangerous contacts. (para 122)

135. The Scottish Executive accepts the unanimous recommendation of all three main Inquiries that emergency vaccination to live should play an important role in any future set of disease control options. These options will include, as in the 2001 outbreak and as required by EU rules, the culling of animals on infected premises and dangerous contacts. This work is being taken forward and a call off contract is currently in place to provide a vaccination resource should it be required. The Executive is however aware that there are significant downstream technical and trade issues which must be resolved before this can be implemented in the spirit intended by the Inquiry Reports. These issues are detailed in the following set of recommendations.

Issues to be resolved:

LL 47: We recommend that the Government establish a consensus on vaccination options for disease control in advance of an outbreak. (p129)

136. The Scottish Executive accepts that a consensus on vaccination options would be valuable and is seeking to promote an informed debate among Scottish stakeholders. This will be achieved by engaging in discussions with industry, retailers, consumer groups and regulatory bodies and also by exercising and rehearsing the Contingency Plan with other agencies, under scenarios which involve vaccination. In these discussions, the Executive will highlight both those shorter term issues such as the design of vaccination strategies and the appropriate trigger points for implementing them and also the longer term barriers relating to trade and consumer acceptability which will need to be addressed on a wider basis.

RS 8.3: In determining the arrangements for deploying emergency vaccination, DEFRA should:

- take account of the urgent need to achieve validation for field use of the tests that discriminate infected from vaccinated animals;
- develop emergency vaccination strategies that integrate theoretical and empirical epidemiology and the logistics of delivery of vaccine cover;
- establish an exit strategy that takes account of the need for on-going surveillance, safeguards for those involved and agreement that products from vaccinated animals can enter the normal human food chain; (p105)

RSE 8.4: That the Government urges the OIE to validate tests that distinguish animals vaccinated against FMD from those that have been exposed to infection. (para 122)

RSE 4: SEERAD should, in consultation with DEFRA, press for early adoption of tests that can discriminate FMD vaccinated from FMD infected animals to facilitate emergency vaccination in dealing with future outbreaks of FMD. A regional laboratory in Scotland could carry out those tests that do not involve the use of live virus. (para 66)

137. For vaccinated products to be acceptable it must be possible to differentiate vaccinated animals from those exposed to infection. This is agreed by the Scottish Executive to be a key area and we will be monitoring the research being undertaken on this subject in the UK, EU and the USA on validation of tests that will achieve this. The Executive will not demand that such tests be done in a Scottish laboratory as depending on circumstances the use of the GB scientific resource may be more appropriate.

138. The Scottish Executive agrees that a range of emergency vaccination strategies should be developed which are based on epidemiological analysis and are logistically credible, noting particularly that these must include decision or “trigger” points to establish when emergency vaccination becomes appropriate. This process is integrated into the Contingency Plan where a range of scenarios and plans will be tested on the ground in practical exercises and then reviewed and updated.

RSE 7 The Food Standards Agency should give public reassurance on the consumption of milk products and meat from vaccinated animals and should do so at a time, not of crisis, but when it is able to be dealt with as a routine issue in relation to imported meat already consumed in Europe. (para 109)

139. During the outbreak, the Food Standards Agency issued clear advice to consumers that there are no public health issues associated with eating food derived from vaccinated animals. This is supported by the Royal Society’s finding that concerns over the safety of products from vaccinated animals “have no foundation”. If further consumer concerns are raised, the Agency will again ensure that authoritative advice on risk is issued. The Scottish Executive considers that wider consumer acceptability of food products from vaccinated animals is a key issue to be resolved and, in line with existing Agency advice, will work with stakeholders to develop greater public understanding.

RSE 8.2: The Government should ensure that vaccine manufacturers are involved in developing a national strategy for adequate production of emergency vaccine. (para 122)

140. The Scottish Executive accepts the Royal Society of Edinburgh’s recommendation for a national strategy for production of vaccine involving manufacturers. The Executive will be collaborating with other UK administrations in taking this work forward.

Other Diseases

RS 9.3: DEFRA should review its arrangements for other diseases, and in particular the developments required to enable emergency vaccination for CSF and bluetongue. (p125)

141. The Scottish Executive agrees that control strategies, including vaccination, should be reviewed for other diseases and will ensure that the spirit of this recommendation is incorporated into its own plans. The FMD Contingency Plan is being developed to widen its applicability to other disease and this will include consideration of the appropriate circumstances for the use of vaccination.

Zoos and Rare Breeds

RS 9.2: As a matter of urgency, DEFRA should draw up arrangements for a process for the prior registration for vaccination of zoos and rare breed collections. (p125)

142. The Scottish Executive accepts that zoos and rare breed collections should be registered for vaccination and will be contacting the relevant organisations to implement this.

Return to Disease free status

RS 8.4: DEFRA should explore with the EU and OIE what improvements to vaccines and surveillance tests are required to allow disease free status to be based entirely on surveillance results without the requirement for a minimum waiting period. (p105)

RSE 8.3: We recommend that the Government presses the European Commission to clarify its policy on the tests and evidence required before exports of livestock and livestock products from a member state that has had the disease can be resumed to other member states. These rules should be no stricter than those applied to other countries. (para 122)

143. The Scottish Executive accepts the desirability of a clearly defined exit strategy. (also see above, recommendation RS 8.3, last point). However the Executive does not at present support a surveillance only approach to regaining export status. One country's export is another's import, and given the disastrous consequences of disease introduction, the Executive believes that a combination of serosurveillance and a waiting period remains the safer balance between economic advantage and risk of disease introduction. The OIE decision to reduce the waiting period (after stamping out and serosurveillance using the non-structural protein test) from 12 to 6 months is welcomed as an appropriate first step.

Prophylactic vaccination

RS 8.1: The Government should take the lead in developing an international research programme aimed at an improved vaccine that would permit routine and global vaccination of livestock against FMD and other List A diseases. (p105)

144. The Executive does not under present circumstances accept the priority given by the Royal Society to research on developing a routine and global vaccination against FMD. While prevention is proverbially better than cure, there are significant technical problems of creating a vaccine to be effective against the large number of known FMD serotypes. Equally significant and wide ranging are the EU and international trade policy issues which would have to be resolved. Realistically this recommendation would divert resources from shorter term and more realisable goals. The review mechanism of the GB Animal Health and Welfare Strategy will identify any major policy or scientific advances that would make this recommendation more viable and allow it to be reprioritised as appropriate within the strategy.

SLAUGHTER

145. All the Inquiry reports have recommended that slaughter of animals on infected premises and dangerous contacts should remain at the heart of a response to stamping out a FMD outbreak.

LL 28: We recommend that DEFRA revise its guidance and instructions for slaughter. (p78)

146. The Scottish Executive accepts this recommendation and in conjunction with DEFRA and the National assembly for Wales is reviewing slaughter guidelines.

DISPOSAL

147. Disposal is a key step in any disease control process to ensure that any risks to animal or public health are minimised. As such it must be undertaken quickly which requires a considerable logistical exercise.

RSE 18: The following priorities should be followed for disposal of carcasses:

- Rendering plants should be considered as the first option but only where the transfer of carcasses can be guaranteed to be within sealed containers to minimise the risk of transferring infection to other premises and stringent disinfecting regimes applied to the transport used.
- Burial on site should be used where there is inadequate rendering capacity provided there are no risks to water resources.

Burning should be used only as a last resort. (para 170)

RSE 20: The Scottish Executive, in consultation with relevant bodies, should give priority to identifying large burial sites throughout Scotland. (para 175)

LL R42: We recommend that burning animals on mass pyres is not used again as a strategy for disposal. (p108)

148. As part of the finalisation of the contingency plan the Executive will be working closely with disposal stakeholders to ensure that the disposal hierarchy:

- rendering
- incineration
- landfill
- burning
- burial

is capable of being appropriately utilised.

149. The Scottish Executive has no desire to see mass pyres, but burning on infected premises will continue to be included in the disposal hierarchy given the importance of ensuring quick disposal of carcasses to avoid potential public health risks and recognising the remoteness of some Scottish locations. However, burning would be among the last of the disposal options.

LL R45: We recommend that local communities be consulted on mass disposal sites according to best practice guidelines, and that the question of compensation for communities accommodating emergency disposal sites be researched. We recognise that this is a complex legal area nationally and at EU level. (p114)

150. Local contingency plans will be taken to consultation with local stakeholders and community interests. Disposal will be one of the issues that they consider as part of the emergency preparedness process. In addition in a disease outbreak should emergency disposal sites be required the Regional Operations Director will ensure that community and other local concerns are weighed against other factors in any decisions which are made and that health and safety and environmental requirements are met. Extensive publicity and information on any mass burial site would be distributed locally. The Scottish Executive does not believe that such consequential compensation should be paid as a matter of course. This is likely to be significantly bureaucratic and difficult to administer in determining who should be compensated and the level at which the payment should be set; and it is not clear that there is any general principle which would justify the payment of taxpayers' money in circumstances where an emergency has imposed a temporary – if unpleasant – inconvenience on a local area.

COMPENSATION

151. The loss of livestock is a financial as well as emotional blow to their keepers. Reflecting the rationale of the stamping out policy as being to prevent further spread of disease Government is obliged to compensate farmers for their losses of stock.

RSE 21: A clear strategy for dealing with the valuation process should be in place and a current list of competent valuers held by SEERAD. An annual review should also be considered to establish stock values and those values should be adhered to throughout any future outbreak. (para 191)

152. Compensation payments have been reviewed in light of the 2001 outbreak. As part of this process we are moving to a list of valuers approved on the basis of their qualifications and experience in livestock valuation. Applications have been invited from known valuers and the resulting list will be published. In addition we are also moving into the process of appointing a panel of senior monitor valuers whose role will be to review the instructions and guidance to valuers and agree on additional ones which may be required during an outbreak. They will also review our valuations in any disease outbreak.

LL R80: We recommend that the joint DEFRA Industry Working Group for Animal Disease Insurance ensure that its scope and membership is set widely enough to address valuation and compensation issues highlighted by the 2001 outbreak. Clear deadlines should be set for reporting progress. (p165)

153. It is important that the industry is fully involved in the development of any changes to the compensation position. The Scottish Executive is represented on the DEFRA led working group and supports their acceptance of the recommendation to widen membership. Scottish Ministers will be responsible for future decisions regarding valuation and compensation in Scotland.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

154. Financial management was the main focus of the National Audit Office report and the Scottish Executive fully endorses the importance of sound financial management supporting the disease control response.

LL R25: We recommend that dedicated control systems be ready for use in a sustained emergency, and regularly tested as part of the contingency planning process. (p74)

LL R26: We recommend that the processes for procuring and delivering the necessary goods and services from external sources during a crisis be reviewed. Systems should be tested to ensure they can cope with unexpected increased demands. (p74)

LL R27: We recommend that priority be given to recruiting accounting and procurement professionals to operate in emergency control centres during a crisis. (p74)

155. Reflecting the recommendation, procurement issues are being fully developed in instructions readily available to those involved in the responses. A dedicated procurement officer will also be appointed to the local DECC.

Records Management

LL R35: We recommend that from day one of an outbreak, provision be made to keep a record of all decisions made and any action to be taken. (p93)

156. The Scottish Executive accepts this recommendation and the revised national contingency plan and local plans will include an officer tasked to records management. The Executive adopted this approach to recording the decisions of the Disease Strategy Group in the 2001 outbreak.

ANIMAL WELFARE

LL R46: We recommend that the Government consider the welfare implications of disease control policies, as part of contingency planning for FMD and other diseases, and seek to identify strategies that minimise the need for slaughter and disposal on welfare grounds. (p119)

157. The Scottish Executive accepts this recommendation and will keep animal welfare under consideration when planning the implementation of slaughter policies and animal movement restrictions.

PUBLIC HEALTH

158. The FMD virus almost never affects humans and the disease does not therefore pose a threat per se to public health. The 2001 outbreak did however create concerns over the effect of the control measures on public health, particularly via environmental routes. (See Slaughter and Disposal section above.) In public health terms there were fears that paradoxically, the cure could be worse than the illness. The Scottish Executive, which has devolved responsibility for health, was aware of these concerns and welcomes Dr Anderson's conclusion that "the risks to the environment and public health associated with disposal have been shown to be minimal".

LL R44: We recommend that all agencies with responsibility for public health be actively involved in designing disease control strategies and in contingency planning and communications. (p112)

RSE 24: SEERAD, in association with other stakeholders, such as local authorities, health boards and where appropriate the local enterprise companies, should establish a responsive system to assist members of the rural community to cope with stress during and following an FMD outbreak. (para 219)

159. In preparing for a future FMD emergency, Dr Anderson recommends the active involvement of public health agencies. The Executive believes that local planning, led by NHS Boards, is the most appropriate way of tackling this. This issue will be raised at the next meeting of Directors of Public Health for an initial discussion and then the Directors could be invited to take the lead locally, with relevant partners, in drawing up local plans attuned to local circumstances. This is in line with the approach taken throughout the contingency planning process, of providing overarching strategic guidance within which local and specialist knowledge makes its unique contribution.

160. The Scottish Contingency Plan also proposes that during an outbreak, interests such as Scottish Executive Health Department, FSA, SEPA etc may be invited to meetings of the Disease Strategy Group as appropriate. It is expected that this will be the main mechanism for accessing strategic level advice on public health issues which arise during the course of an outbreak. At operational level, the Regional Operations Director (ROD) would normally establish a local team including Directors of Public and Environmental Health and this team would be responsible for activating the provisions of the local plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

161. Environmental effects must be considered as a core element of the disease control process and the head of the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department will ensure that environmental issues are reflected in disease control decisions.

RSE 19: SEPA's role in protecting the environment should be properly incorporated into the contingency planning and the management of the emergency at the highest level. (para 173)

162. SEPA will be invited to Disease Strategy Group meetings where they are able to offer input to specific discussions. However, they have a vital role to play on the ground working alongside the Regional Operations Director and Divisional Veterinary Manager in agreeing

disposal solutions and also providing input into other issues such as the location of cleansing and disinfection sites. SEPA are core members of the DECC management team and their roles are explained in both national and local contingency plans.

ACCESS

163. Access was a contentious issue in 2001 and the closure of footpaths in many areas created significant problems for other parts of the rural economy, particularly the tourism sector. Considerable work was undertaken to reopen the countryside based on risk assessments and explanation of dangers involved and the draft contingency plan aims to build on this experience.

RSE 22: In the event of an outbreak, unless its origins and spread are immediately apparent, the countryside should be closed for a limited period of three weeks at the same time as the animal movement ban is announced; but as soon as the extent of the disease is determined, the closure should be lifted in a non-affected areas. (para 198)

164. The Scottish Executive is not able to accept this recommendation. Footpath closures for as long as three weeks would have a significant impact on the wider rural economy which cannot be justified in terms of the risks involved; and the suggestion that “the countryside” should be closed without regard to the specific veterinary assessment of risk would create unnecessary concern and loss for rural businesses. The draft contingency plan expects that as part of the creation of the Blue Box footpaths around the infected premise will be closed to minimise any risk of further disease spread. Outside the Blue Box the expectation is that the countryside will be kept open with closure only being permitted on the basis of a veterinary risk assessment. The assessment would take a presumption in favour of access as its starting point. The Scottish Executive will be discussing this issue in depth with the Access Forum at the end of November but the responses from the Contingency Plan consultation exercise have been generally favourable.

165. The finalised Contingency Plan will also include guidance to access users and utility workers on biosecurity steps they should take in a disease situation. This will complement the ‘peacetime’ advice included in the Biosecurity Code of Practice.

ANNEX A

Weblinks to key documents:

Inquiry Reports:

<http://www.fmd-lessonslearned.org.uk> (Anderson Lessons Learned)

<http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/inquiry/> (Royal Society)

<http://www.ma.hw.ac.uk/RSE/> (Royal Society of Edinburgh)

http://www.nao.gov.uk/publications/nao_reports/01-02/0102939.pdf (National Audit Office)

Scottish Executive publications:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/agri/footandmouth/> (main SE FMD website)

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/agri/footandmouth/pubs/anderson_enquiry.pdf (narrative history of 2001 outbreak in Scotland and evidence to Anderson Inquiry)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/agriculture/fmdcontingency.pdf>
(Draft Contingency Plan)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/agri/footandmouth/pubs/valcoxConcRecom.pdf> (conclusions and recommendations of internal management review of handling of 2001 outbreak)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc15/rsna-00.asp> (“Rural Scotland: A New Approach” published in May 2000.)

Other administrations:

<http://www.DEFRA.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/fmd/default.htm> (main DEFRA FMD website)

<http://www.footandmouth.wales.gov.uk/scripts/index.asp> (Welsh Assembly FMD website)

<http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/> (Northern Ireland Executive, with links to FMD website)

ANNEX B

Recommendations not included in the Scottish Executive response:

1. As outlined in Chapter III, many of the recommendations are specifically aimed at DEFRA rather than at the Scottish Executive. However the majority of the recommendations have been addressed in this response, even though they do not refer specifically to Scotland; this is to reflect the devolved responsibilities of the Scottish Executive.
2. However, a small number of recommendations refer solely to arrangements in England and Wales and these have not been addressed. These recommendations are all from the Dr Anderson Lessons to be Learned Report, and are set out below.

LL R4: Where regional boundaries of Government Offices do not match those of local authorities or other agencies of government, special provision should be made in contingency planning for management and communications in a crisis. (p28)

LL R31: The National Assembly for Wales and DEFRA should develop a comprehensive agreement for co-ordinating the management of outbreaks of infectious animal diseases in Wales. This should cover all aspects of a disease outbreak, delegating responsibility locally, where appropriate, and providing clear lines of communication and accountability. (p84)

LL R41: The concept of a “senatorial group” should be developed to provide independent advice to the Prime Minister and Cabinet during national crises. (p107)

LL R55: DEFRA should develop its regional communication strategy and ensure that it has effective systems for disseminating clear and concise information quickly to all its regional offices. This should be developed in the context of cross government crisis management planning, in consultation with the Regional Co-ordination Unit and Government Offices. (p143)

ANNEX C

Terms of Reference of the Inquiries

Anderson Lessons to be Learned:

To make recommendations for the way in which the Government should handle any future major animal disease outbreak, in the light of the lessons identified from the handling of the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak in Great Britain.

The recommendations will be addressed to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and to the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales.

Royal Society:

To review scientific questions relating to the transmission, prevention and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious disease in livestock in Great Britain, and to make recommendations by Summer 2002.

The inquiry should take close account of related inquiries, notably the administrative inquiry into the handling of the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak and the policy commission on the future of agriculture.

Royal Society of Edinburgh:

The remit of the group carrying out the work will be to investigate the outbreak, spread and organism causing the disease with particular regard to its control, the impact on the economy, particularly that of tourism and rural affairs generally; and to draw lessons for the future.

