Invitation to attend BTSF Workshop

ANIMAL HEALTH CONTINGENCY PLANNING AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

To be held at FVO, Grange, Ireland on 7-9 OCTOBER 2015

Dear Participant

You are invited to attend the BTSF workshop: ‘Animal Health Contingency Planning and Emergency Preparedness’ to be held at the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), Grange, Dunsany, County Meath, Ireland from Wednesday 7 October to Friday 9 October 2015.

The workshop is being organised by Food Safety Training Solutions (FSTS) under the European Commission Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) initiative.

**Overall objective of BTSF**

The overall objective of BTSF training under this contract is to strengthen Member States’ (MSs) response to FVO audits.

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerns official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules. Article 45 of the Regulation requires that Commission experts carry out general and specific audits in MSs. The main purpose is to verify that official controls take place in MSs in accordance with multi-annual national control plans and in compliance with Community law.

Audits are carried out by the FVO of the European Commission Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE).

The **goals** of the workshop are that participants and their respective Member States:

1. take ownership of the findings and conclusions of audit overview reports and use them to improve their official control activities;
2. gain an understanding of good practices elsewhere in the EU and how they might be adopted in their own situation, possibly with modification to the specific structures and organisation of controls;
3. discuss weaknesses and recurring problems with a view to identifying possible root causes and solutions to remedy or alleviate the problems.

Participants should have sufficient professional experience and responsibility to be in a position to pass on their training to others following the course.

**Background to the workshop**

The Commission organised two workshops in Grange in 2013 and 2014 on animal health contingency planning and emergency preparedness. These provided a forum for exchange of experience and practices among Member States, European Economic Area (EEA) states and the relevant units of DG SANTE.

This BTSF workshop is a continuation of the two previous sessions. An overview report from FVO audits carried out between 2012 and 2014 on contingency planning is currently being finalised, and this provides the context for the workshop.

**Specific objective of the workshop**

The specific objective of the workshop is to agree basic principles for the effective operation of two fundamental pillars of the EU animal health early warning and emergency preparedness systems. These topics have been selected following the identification of best practices and weaknesses, and the conclusions of the overview of the series of audits.

The topics are:

* Surveillance systems for early detection of exotic and emerging diseases

This topic encompasses numerous examples of good practice found by the FVO audits and has been highlighted by the audited countries as the basic pillar of effective disease control.

* Operational arrangements to ensure that animal welfare standards are respected in the event of animal depopulation as a result of a large disease outbreak.

This topic deserves special attention as it has been identified by the FVO audits as one of the areas where improvements are necessary. Examples of good practice will be shared to raise awareness of the feasibility of putting in place a system that will be both effective and fully compliant with EU legislation.

The workshop will begin with the following presentations:

* A summary of the findings and conclusions of the overview report of the series of audits carried out by the FVO from 2012 to 2014.
* The introduction of good practice in relation to a number of relevant topics, including the two mentioned above.
* A summary of the coordination and technical assistance activities by the European Commission on the early response and management of the recent outbreaks of African swine fever in the EU.

After the presentations, the participants will work in groups to discuss the two pillars: the early detection system for exotic and emerging diseases, and; the animal welfare implications of animal depopulation in the event of a disease outbreak. The outcomes of the discussions will be compiled by the participants during the meeting.

Finally, the outcome from the discussion groups will be summarised and documented to underline the principles of good practice conducive to the effective operation of the topics discussed.

FSTS has setup an interactive website for disseminating information on each BTSF workshop and enabling discussion and contributions from participants. Course participants will be given logon details and advice on using the site.

**Target participants**

1. The workshop is aimed at senior contingency planners and implementing officials from the competent authorities of EU Member States and EFTA countries. Whilst each participating country may propose its choice of participant(s), continuity from previous workshops would be an asset.
2. This BTSF workshop is not a training session. The format of the workshop is designed to encourage participation, peer group discussions and sharing of ideas. Participants will have an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas in the workshop and plenary sessions.
3. Certain Member State experts have already been invited to present specific examples of good practice. We will invite a number of other Member States to propose suitable experts to speak on specific subjects.
4. Participants should guarantee to disseminate the findings from the workshop on return to their home countries. Dissemination methods will be addressed in group discussions and follow-up support will be provided, including the use of web tools.
5. Information packages will be forwarded to participants before the workshop.
6. Please note that the workshop will be conducted in English and interpretation will not be available.

The workshop is being organised by the Food Safety Training Solutions (FSTS) Consortium who will act as facilitators and provide pedagogical support. This will include specific web-based services before, during and after the event.

**DG SANTE contributors**

The following contributors will attend from DG SANTE:

Unit F6: Francisco Javier Pérez Pérez, Lena Englund, Ankica Labrovic, Milos Juras, Terence Cassidy, Vasco Antunes, Benoit Sauveroche, Ana Ramirez Vela

Unit G2: Laszlo Kuster, Francesco Berlingieri

**Timing**

The workshop sessions will start on Wednesday afternoon, 7 October 2015 and end at lunchtime on Friday, 9 October 2015.

Depending on flight schedules to Dublin, the aim is that most participants will travel to FVO, Grange, Ireland on the morning of Wednesday, 7 October 2015 and return home on Friday afternoon, 9 October 2015.

Participants for whom it is not possible to arrange suitable flight connections will arrive on Tuesday, 6 October 2015 or return on Saturday 10 October 2015. We will do our best to avoid additional nights, but we hope you will understand that this is not always feasible.

**WORKSHOP AGENDA**

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| **BTSF Workshop on Contingency Planning and Emergency Preparedness, 7-9 October 2015** | | |
| **Wednesday 7 October 2015** | | |
| Afternoon session | Welcome (Chairman and DG SANTE) | Kenneth Clarke, FSTS, Chairman  Ana Ramirez (SANTE F6)  Laszlo Kuster (SANTE G2) |
|  | Plenary presentation:  Overview of the FVO series of audits | Francisco Javier Pérez Pérez (SANTE F6) |
|  | Plenary good practice session:  Early detection of exotic, new and re-emerging diseases ­­— The interplay between disease awareness and effective animal health surveillance.  Examples:   * The National Epidemiological Surveillance Platform and animal health surveillance in France. * The early detection system for animal diseases in Switzerland. | Didier Calavas  Coordinator of the National Epidemiological Surveillance Platform,  French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES)  Daniela Hadorn  Head of Early Detection Section,  Division of Risk Assessment  Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office, Switzerland |
|  | Coffee break | |
|  | Plenary good practice session:  Emergency preparedness — Information management tools for rapid response and effective disease control and eradication. | Pasquale Simonetti  National Crisis Management Centre – Animal Health,  Directorate General for Animal Health and Veterinary Medicinal Products,  Ministry of Health, Italy |
|  | Plenary good practice session:  Emergency preparedness – Animal depopulation: Respect of animal welfare standards in the event of a disease outbreak. | Catrin Molander  Head of Division for Crisis Management,  Swedish Board of Agriculture |
|  | Plenary presentation:  Coordination by the Commission of the early response and management of the recent outbreaks of African swine fever in the EU. | Francesco Berlingieri (SANTE G2) |
|  | Plenary session:  Introduction of the activities for the working groups | Benoît Sauveroche (SANTE F6) |

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| **Thursday 8 October 2015** | | |
| Morning session | Working groups:  The pillars of an effective early warning system — Options for exotic animal diseases, including vector-borne diseases and diseases affecting wildlife. | Moderators (SANTE F6):  Francisco Javier Pérez Pérez,  Lena Englund,  Ankica Labrovic |
|  | Coffee break | |
|  | Working groups:  Animal depopulation and animal welfare — Options, preparation of guidance, SOPs and action plans. | Moderators (SANTE F6):  Terence Cassidy,  Vasco Antunes,  Milos Juras |
|  | Lunch break | |
| Afternoon session | Combined working groups:  Preparation of summaries and of presentations from the discussions on the early warning system and on animal depopulation | All moderators |
|  | Coffee break | |
|  | Plenary presentations:  Lessons learnt from the recent outbreaks of African swine fever in the EU: *Ex-post* analysis of the effectiveness of the emergency preparedness system and ways to improve it. | Presentations to be made by invited participants from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia (15 minutes each).  Moderator: Laszlo Kuster (SANTE G2) |

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| **Friday 9 October 2015** | | |
| Morning session | Presentations of the conclusions of the working groups:  Two presentations by the rapporteurs of the two discussion groups and one presentation by the moderator of the discussion on African swine fever – Three presentations (15 minutes + 20 minutes discussion each) | Rapporteurs of the two working groups  Moderator: Laszlo Kuster (SANTE G2) |
|  | Coffee break |  |
|  | Introduction to the FVO study visits in 2016 | Lena Englund and Terence Cassidy (SANTE F6) |
|  | Concluding remarks and closing of the workshop | Benoît Sauveroche (SANTE F6) |
| 12.30 | Lunch and depart | |

Further information and course material will be made available to participants on a dedicated website before the start of the event.

**Social events**

A welcome cocktail party will be held at the hotel on the first evening. FVO staff and course tutors will be invited. This will be followed by dinner for participants.

A three course dinner will be held on the second evening followed by a show of Irish music.

**Logistical arrangements**

The Food Safety Training Solutions Consortium (FSTS) led by Agri-Livestock Consultants Ltd (ALC) has been appointed to organise the event and make logistical arrangements. The FSTS contact address is [alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com](mailto:alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com). Participant arrangements will be made by Anne Martin, who can be contacted at this address.

The following participant costs will be paid by the European Commission:

1. Economy class (or equivalent) flights from the nearest convenient airport to Dublin or first-class train or bus travel as appropriate; transfer from and to Dublin airport to the hotel; transfers from the hotel to FVO offices and any visit locations.
2. Travel costs from the participant’s home to the nearest airport/bus station/train station will be covered if requested together with an estimate of the costs. You are expected to travel by public transport wherever possible.
3. Full board accommodation including room, breakfast, lunch and dinner.
4. Refreshments during morning and afternoon coffee breaks.

**Travel**

It is anticipated that most participants will arrive at FVO, Grange on Wednesday morning, 7 October 2015. Some participants may need to arrive on Tuesday, 6 October 2015 if it is not possible to arrange flights on Wednesday morning. Most participants will depart on Friday 9 October unless it is not possible to arrange flight connections and it is necessary to stay an extra night.

**Hotel**

Accommodation will be provided at the Trim Castle Hotel, a short journey from the FVO offices at Grange:

Trim Castle Hotel, Castle Street, Trim, Co. Meath, Ireland  
Telephone: +353 (0)46 948 3000

Fax: +353 (0)46 948 3077  
Email: [info@trimcastlehotel.com](mailto:info@trimcastlehotel.com)

Web: <http://www.trimcastlehotel.com/>

**Acceptance of invitation and logistical arrangements**

Please complete the attached form indicating whether you are able to attend and providing the requested logistical details.

Please send the completed application form to your national contact point (NCP) for BTSF training. A list of NCPs is available from the website: <http://ec.europa.eu/food/training_strategy/participants/ms_contact_points_en.htm>

We apologise for the short response time but please make every effort to reply to your national contact point (NCP) with a copy to [alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com](mailto:alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

**Application to attend BTSF training**

**Animal Health Contingency Planning and Emergency Preparedness**

**To be held at FVO, Grange, Ireland on 7-9 October** **2015**

**Please complete the following application details:**

I wish to attend the above training course on 7-9 October 2015 Yes / No

I agree to participate in follow up activities to disseminate

the knowledge gained on return to my home country Yes / No

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|  | Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms) |  |
|  | Academic Title (Dr., Prof.) |  |
| i | **Full name as in passport:** |  |
|  | First Name |  |
|  | Family Name |  |
| ii | Position |  |
| iii | Organisation / department |  |
| iv | Address |  |
| v | City |  |
| vi | Country |  |
| vii | Email address |  |
| viii | Contact telephone |  |
| ix | Preferred airport of departure |  |
| x | Do you have adequate English language skills to attend the above course as no interpretation or translation facilities will be available? | Yes / No |
| xi | Please indicate any special physical or dietary needs that need to be considered? |  |
| xii | Have you already been contacted by the FVO concerning your participation at this event? | Yes / No |
| xiii | Will you require reimbursement of your travel costs between your home and the airport? Please indicate the type of transport and the expected cost to and from the airport. Provide additional information on a separate sheet of paper if necessary. | Yes / No |

Do you have any queries or comments concerning the training course?

If so, please explain in the box below:

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Please complete the application and respond to your National Contact Point (NCP) with a copy to [alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com](mailto:alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com) as soon as possible. We look forward to meeting you at the workshop.

Anne Martin

Deputy Event Manager, FSTS Consortium

[alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com](mailto:alc.btsf.contingency@gmail.com)