

CHAPTER 32

ROLE OF OTHER AUTHORITIES, AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS

INTRODUCTION

During an FMD emergency there will be an immediate requirement for large numbers of additional personnel and resources of all kinds over and above those available within the Department of Agriculture and Food. The assistance of other Government Departments and agencies is critical, therefore to the efficient and effective control of an outbreak. This chapter outlines the roles which may be played by other authorities, agencies and individuals.

CONTENTS

1. Gardai
 2. Private veterinary practitioner (PVP)
 3. Local Authority
 4. Farmer
 5. Revenue Commissioners (Customs)
 6. Defence Forces
 7. Office of Public Works
 8. Farm Relief Services
 9. Teagasc
 10. Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources
 11. Department of Environment and Local Government
 12. Department of Transport
- Annex 1 Veterinary practice in an infected area

1. GARDAI

- 1.1 The Gardai have a central role during an outbreak of FMD in:
- enforcement of movement controls (on/off IPs, control zones, border and nationally)
 - investigation of irregularities in liaison, as necessary, with SIU/Epidemiology Section
 - receipt of notification of suspected outbreaks (and passing this notification to the NDCC/LDCC)
 - back-up for field staff.
- 1.2 Section 46 of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1966, provides the Garda Siochana with powers to enforce the Act and Orders made under it.
- 1.3 The Gardai will be informed of all suspect and confirmed infected premises. The original of any **Form A** notice imposing temporary restrictions on the movement of livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and deer), meat, milk and germinal products (semen, ova and embryos) within 8 km of a suspect premises must be given by hand to the local Garda Superintendent. A copy of all **Form Bs** served on premises in the area, must also be given to the Garda Superintendent.
- 1.4 When FMD is confirmed, and a Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) is established, the SVI will inform the Garda Superintendent of the relevant contact numbers for:
- the SVI
 - VI in charge of Surveillance (for reports of suspect FMD)
 - Epidemiology Section (for intelligence of relevance to FMD controls)
 - VI in charge of movement controls.
- A Garda liaison officer based at the LDCC provides for optimal communications.
- 1.5 To facilitate Garda activities it is essential that the SVI at the LDCC provides the local Gardai with a list of DAF personnel and vehicle registration numbers. Where non-departmental personnel are engaged in disease control activities their names and vehicle registration numbers should also be provided. If Department personnel are provided with vehicle identification badges samples should be provided to the Gardai.
- 1.6 Where border controls are established due to suspicion or confirmation of FMD in Northern Ireland, the Gardai will nominate a Liaison Officer for all border checks. (In 2001 the Liaison Officer was located in Sligo.)
- 1.7 Garda personnel will be asked to attend at the entrance to any premises to which Form A relates. The VI in charge of a suspect premises should explain in detail to all Garda personnel involved the restrictions which will apply. It should not be assumed that each Garda officer will have his duties explained by other Gardai when the officer first arrives for duty. **The VI at the suspect premises should reinforce the instruction that for biosecurity reasons the media are not to be allowed access to the environs of the infected place.**

- 1.8** When FMD has been confirmed, a Protection Zone (minimum 3 km radius) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10 km radius) will be established. Gardai will be asked to staff the checks points at the limits of the Surveillance Zone. The Gardai will be required to enforce restrictions on the movement of anything which could facilitate the spread of disease within the area. Permitted movements will only be allowed if accompanied by a movement licence. Specimen licences should be made available to the Gardai. The senior veterinary officer should advise the Garda superintendent of the type of movements which constitute the greatest disease risk. Agricultural Officers will be made available to assist the Gardai at static check points. The VI in charge of movement controls at the LDCC will be available to advise when required.
- 1.9** If a VI is denied access to any premises under investigation, he or she should withdraw from the premises and notify the SVI at the LDCC immediately. The senior officer should advise the Garda superintendent for the area in which the premises is located and request the attendance of Garda officers at the premises as a matter of urgency. The VI should not attempt to enter the premises until the Gardai arrive.
- 1.10** If the SVI is notified of suspect disease at a mart or slaughter plant, the officer in charge at the local Garda station should be informed immediately. The Gardai should be requested to enforce a complete prohibition on the movement of people, animals and vehicles from the premises pending a decision on further action by senior officers at the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC).

2. PRIVATE VETERINARY PRACTITIONER (PVP)

- 2.1** The PVP may assist in the control of an FMD outbreak in the following ways:
- increasing farmer awareness of disease
 - helping LDCCs to carry out clinical surveillance and supervising slaughter on infected premises
 - carrying out vaccination.
- 2.2** The first indication of a possible outbreak of disease may come from the PVP, who is obliged to notify the Department of any suspicion of FMD.
- 2.3** The PVP will be instructed by the officer taking the report not to undertake any further clinical farm visits, State disease eradication duties or meat inspection activities pending the completion of a preliminary inspection of the suspect. If he or she has visited other farms since examining the suspect animal(s), the list of these farms will be requested. If the PVP notifies the suspicion from the premises where the suspect is located, he or she should be instructed to remain on the premises pending the arrival of a VI.
- 2.4** In the highly unlikely event that the PVP is unwilling to remain on the premises or to accept that he or she is 'grounded' pending completion of the preliminary inspection, a notice under **Article 19** of the Foot and Mouth Disease Order, 1956 may be served on the individual (see Annex 12, Chapter 26, **Notices**). The Gardai will be informed of this and may be asked to enforce compliance with the terms of the notice.

- 2.5 If the preliminary inspection gives rise to the suspicion that disease may be present, the DVO SVI should advise the PVP that no further farm visits can be undertaken pending the completion of laboratory tests on suspect materials from the premises.
- 2.6 Any premises visited by the PVP since the visit to the suspect premises will be treated as a High Risk contact, and will be visited by a VI from the DVO/LDCC and put under **Form D** restriction.
- 2.7 The PVP's vehicle and all equipment contained therein should be cleaned, disinfected and, where practicable, the equipment sterilised. The vehicle itself should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected externally, particular attention being paid to the underside and wheel arches. All clothing worn by the PVP on the suspect premises should be immersed in an approved disinfectant for FMD.
- 2.8 All PVPs engaged in either clinical practice or State schemes within a five mile (8 km) radius of the suspect case will be contacted by phone by the SVI in charge at the local office and advised that all **State disease activities are suspended** until the results of the laboratory tests are known and that clinical visits to farms should be restricted to urgent calls only.
- 2.9 The PVPs contacted should be requested to prepare and submit detailed lists of all farm visits made to premises within an 8 km radius of the suspect premises during the **10 days** prior to the suspect report.
- 2.10 If large pig units are located within the 8 km radius it should be remembered that veterinary service may be provided by a PVP/consultant from outside the immediate area. This individual should be identified by the DVO as a matter of urgency. The name of the person should be passed to NDCC personnel by phone immediately.
- 2.11 Livestock on premises under formal restriction may require veterinary attention. Such visits must be authorised and can only be undertaken under permit, following notification to the DVO/LDCC SVI. The veterinary surgeon making any such visits will be required to undergo full disinfection procedures and to leave his or her vehicle outside the premises.
- 2.12 If FMD is confirmed on the premises, a Protection Zone (minimum 3 km radius) and a Surveillance Zone (minimum 10 km radius) will be established. All PVPs operating within the infected area will be issued with the advice leaflet 'Veterinary practice in an infected area' in **Annex 1** below.

3. THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

3.1 Local Authority assistance in FMD duties

- a) Each Local Authority (LA) now employs a Veterinary Inspector (LAVI). He or she is the appropriate person to liaise between the Department of Agriculture and the LA and to co-ordinate the services of all LA personnel involved in FMD-related activities.
- b) The LAVI will be responsible for closing any LA abattoir located within a Protection Zone or Surveillance Zone.

- c) Each LA employs engineers who possess valuable knowledge of local geological conditions and can advise on the location and construction of burial sites.
- d) Each LA has a Civil Defence section which has volunteers who may be requested to:
 - assist at burial sites
 - carry out cleaning and disinfection duties
 - source and transport food to essential sites
 - provide emergency lighting.
- e) Each LA has a list of operators of lifting and digging equipment that may be contracted for work at burial sites.

3.2 Copying formal notices to the LA

- a) Copies of all formal notices (**Forms A and B**) issued under the FMD Order, 1956 should be faxed and posted to the Director of Services (Environment) in the relevant LA. Where the area involved in restrictions includes more than one LA area, copies of all formal notices should be sent to each of the LA Directors of Services (Environment).
- b) The veterinary officer in charge at the local District Veterinary Office should notify the Director of Services (Environment) and the LAVI if the preliminary investigation gives rise to suspicion of disease.
- c) The notification should include reference to the possible requirement for both LA personnel and equipment for use on the suspect premises.

3.3 Assistance with burial of carcasses on infected premises

- a) Senior veterinary officers at Agriculture House will advise if a preliminary assessment of the premises for carcase disposal purposes is to be undertaken in advance of confirmation of disease.
- b) In selecting LA personnel for disease duties the LA Secretary should be advised that individuals who are themselves stockowners should not be considered.
- c) The selection of a suitable site on the premises for carcase disposal by burial will require the direct involvement of LAVI and LA engineering personnel. The Director of Services (Environment) should be requested to make such personnel available.
- d) The veterinary officer in charge of the suspect/confirmed premises should be guided by the engineer and the LAVI in making the choice of site. **NB. the site chosen should not be visible from the public road, if possible.**
- e) If the engineer considers that no suitable site is available on the premises the veterinary officer in charge at the local DVO should be informed immediately.
- f) LA personnel deployed for duty on any suspect/confirmed premises must be provided with appropriate protective clothing and footwear before entering the premises. The LA should provide this clothing.

- g) The LA engineer seconded for disease duties should undertake the selection and hiring of plant for use on any premises. The Department officer in charge of the premises should ensure that a detailed record is made of all plant, equipment and personnel involved.
- h) The LA should be requested to make and keep an exact record of all plant and equipment hired and the periods for which it was in use.
- i) It is essential that LA personnel deployed for disease duties are under the supervision of a LA supervisor. The Department officer in charge of the premises should clearly establish:
 - the duties to be undertaken
 - the manner and sequence in which they are to be undertaken
 - biosecurity protocols that must be followed.
- j) **If any individual involved in disease duties is unwilling or unable to carry out assigned duties the LAVI should be advised immediately.**
- k) All protective clothing and footwear used by LA personnel should remain on site throughout the period of use on the premises. On completion of each day's activities all clothing and footwear should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and stored on site. LA personnel will be required to use the facilities at the Local Biosecurity Centre at the end of each day.
- l) Before any plant or equipment is removed from the premises it must be cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the veterinary officer in charge. The cleaning and disinfection must be carried out under the direct supervision of an officer of the Department.
- m) If plant or equipment is available on site and owned by the owner/occupier of the premises it may be hired and used, with the agreement of the owner/occupier.
- n) Damage to property arising from the activities of LA personnel or plant hire personnel should be recorded by the DAF officer in charge of the premises and be brought to the attention of the SVI in charge at the Local Disease Control Centre. A copy should be forwarded to the LA liaison officer.

4. FARMER

- 4.1 The farmer will probably be the first person to suspect that his or her animals are sick.
- 4.2 The VI carrying out the initial or subsequent investigations of suspect disease should be sensitive to the effects that the possibility of an outbreak of FMD will have on the farmer and his or her family.
- 4.3 The information required to complete the Suspect Premises Report has to come from an individual who will inevitably be under a considerable degree of stress. It is very likely that in the initial stages there will be large gaps in the individual's memory of recent events.

- 4.4 The VI should not attempt to complete the report in 'one go' as essential information may be missed. A re-inspection of the animals exposed to disease or the taking of a preliminary stock census should allow time for recollection by the owner of the premises. The owner of the premises should be given the report form to examine with his or her family and farm workers. There may have been visitors or deliveries to the premises which are outside the knowledge of any one person on the premises.
- 4.5 Attempts to pressurise the owner/occupier of the premises may be counterproductive.
- 4.6 It is essential, pending the completion of the preliminary investigation, that **no one is permitted to leave the premises**. The investigating officer should use a degree of tact in ensuring compliance with this prohibition.
- 4.7 If disease is confirmed it must be appreciated that in most situations the slaughter of the herd/flock will have a deep psychological effect on the owner and his or her family. If the owner or any family member does not wish to be involved in the operations, their wishes must be respected. **Under no circumstances should the officer in charge try to insist on such involvement.**
- 4.8 The owner of the premises should be advised by the officer in charge that it is highly likely he/she will become the focus of media attention. The officer cannot interfere with such coverage, but it may be helpful to the farmer for the veterinary officer to point out the potential advantages and disadvantages of such attention.
- 4.9 **Within the constraints of disease control, the wishes and needs of the owner and his or her family must be accommodated as much as possible.**

5. REVENUE COMMISSIONERS (CUSTOMS)

- 5.1 Customs officers may assist in carrying out checks for illegal importation of animals or animal products if an import ban is in place due to an FMD outbreak in the country of origin.
- 5.2 If the outbreak is in Northern Ireland, Customs officers may provide mobile border patrols.
- 5.3 If the outbreak is in another country (particularly in another Member State of the EU), Customs officers may assist in baggage checks at airports and ports.
- 5.4 The contact point in the Office of the Revenue Commissioners is the Principal Officer in the Customs and Excise Enforcement Operations section of the Customs and Excise Enforcement Division (currently Michael Colgan).

6. THE ROLE OF THE DEFENCE FORCES

- 6.1 In the event of an 'escalating scenario' the Defence Forces will be requested to assist with the logistics of slaughter and disposal.
- 6.2 The Defence Forces may assist in the surveillance for wildlife (provision of helicopters) and the culling of wildlife (provision of marksmen).
- 6.3 The Defence Forces may assist in controls on the disposal of international swill.
- 6.4 The Defence Forces will also provide aid to civil authorities.

7. THE ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS (OPW)

- 7.1 In the event of a decision to dispose of carcasses of infected animals by burning, OPW personnel will assist in the building of pyres.
- 7.2 The OPW can provide heavy-duty machinery, if required, to assist in disposal by burial.
- 7.3 Dúchas Wildlife Rangers will assist in identifying susceptible wildlife in an infected area.

8. THE ROLE OF THE FARM RELIEF SERVICE

- 8.1 The Farm Relief Service can provide staff for disinfection duties at checkpoints on borders, Surveillance Zones and ports.
- 8.2 The Farm Relief Service can provide mobile animal handling equipment (gates, crushes) which may be required to facilitate clinical examinations during surveillance activities, and in the event of vaccination.
- 8.3 The Farm Relief Service can provide staff experienced in handling animals to assist in implementing a vaccination plan.

9. TEAGASC

- 9.1 Teagasc advisory staff are an invaluable source of local knowledge of farming communities and are experienced in communicating with farmers.
- 9.2 Teagasc staff may assist in the following ways:
 - staffing of farmer help lines
 - provision of expert staff to LDCC sections
 - assistance with compilation of census figures at LDCCs
 - provision of counselling service (Teagasc/DAF service for depopulated herds)
 - issuing of movement permits as part of the national movement controls.

10. THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARINE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- 10.1** The Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources has responsibility for larger ports and those ports constituted as Harbour Authorities under the Harbours Act, 1946.
- 10.2** In the event of an increased threat from FMD in a country with direct sea connections to Ireland, DAF officials from HQ (NDCC or Staffing and Logistics Unit) will liaise with the relevant officials in the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources to ensure that the accurate and up to date information is communicated to Port Authorities and the Masters of vessels on:
- the rules pertaining to disposal of international food waste
 - any prohibitions that exist on the import of animal products
 - the need for disinfection of footwear of passengers.
- 10.3** The contact point is the Principal Officer in the Maritime Transport section (currently David Glynn).
- 10.4** In an 'escalating scenario', officers of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources will co-ordinate the response at ports and airports, and hold regular meetings with the Departments of Environment and Local Government, Transport and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners.

11. THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 11.1** Local Authorities have responsibility for the collection of waste, including food waste (swill), from small ports and other landing points.
- 11.2** In the event of an increased threat from FMD in a country from which small sea craft are likely to arrive in Ireland, DAF officials from HQ (NDCC or Staffing and Logistics Unit) will liaise with the relevant officials in the Department of Environment and Local Government to ensure that:
- notices and a map are displayed at all landing points directing small craft to dispose of food waste at designated collection points
 - disposal of swill is by deep burial or back-filling
 - notices outlining FMD precautions are displayed at all landing points
 - disinfection facilities are present at each landing point.
- 11.3** The contact point in the Department of Environment and Local Government is the Principal Officer of the Fire Services and Emergency Planning Section (currently Tony Boland).
- 11.4** DVOs maintain a list of all landing points and contact personnel in their area. Periodic checks to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place at small landing points will be carried out by DVO personnel.

12. THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

- 12.1** The Department of Transport has responsibility for road, rail and air transport.
- 12.2** In the event of an increased threat from FMD in another country (particularly in another Member State of the EU), DAF officials from HQ (NDCC or Staffing and Logistics Unit) will liaise with the relevant officials in the Department of Transport to ensure that passengers at airports are made aware of:
- rules relating to the import of animal products
 - the necessity for disinfection of footwear of passengers.
- 12.3** The contact point is the Assistant Principal responsible for Aer Lingus Corporate Affairs (currently Mary Dunning).

ANNEX 1

VETERINARY PRACTICE IN THE INFECTED AREA

1. PVPs who wish to undertake farm visits within the infected area shall carry a copy of Notice to the Garda Síochána permitting them to operate within the area. The notice must be presented to the Gardai on duty at the time of entry to and exit from a Surveillance Zone.
2. Veterinary visits to premises within the area will be restricted to the examination and treatment of sick animals. All State schemes will be suspended within the infected area.
3. Before undertaking any farm visits within the Protection or Surveillance Zones:
 - the vehicle(s) used by the PVP must be thoroughly cleaned to remove any material adhering to the vehicle surfaces. This cleaning should include the chassis and wheel arches.
 - the PVP should determine if any of the animals to be treated are showing evidence of **vesiculation**. If the owner indicates that there may be blisters on any of his animals the SVI at the LDCC should be notified before the farm visit is undertaken.
 - the PVP must wear protective clothing and footwear of such a type as to allow for full disinfection prior to visit each farm
 - the PVP should carry sufficient quantities of approved disinfectant for use on each premises.
4. On arrival on the premises to be visited the PVP should put on full protective clothing prior to the examination of any animal. He or she should:
 - enquire from the owner/occupier as to the health of all livestock on the premises
 - determine if any animals have died on and been removed from the premises during the period of 7 days preceding the imposition of area restrictions
 - determine if the owner/occupier has had any contact with premises under restriction immediately prior to or since the imposition of restrictions.
5. Where the wearing of protective clothing could interfere with the ability of the PVP to carry out the required veterinary intervention, alternative clothing (calving gown, surgical clothing) may be used. In this situation, all such clothing must be subjected to proper cleaning and disinfection after use. Clothing which cannot be adequately cleaned should not be worn for subsequent visits.
6. If in the course of the examination of any livestock on the premises the PVP has any grounds for suspecting the existence of FMD, the examination should be discontinued and the suspicion reported to the SVI in charge at the LDCC. The veterinary surgeon should remain on the premises pending the arrival of a VI.
7. Following the completion of examination and treatment the PVP must thoroughly clean and disinfect all equipment prior to leaving the premises. Surgical instruments which may have been used on the premises must be sterilised by boiling.
8. Prior to leaving the premises the PVP must fully disinfect his or her protective clothing, using approved disinfectants.

9. Where a PVP is requested to visit a premises under formal restriction (**Form D**) the SVI in charge of the LDCC should be informed in advance of the call being made. In making such a farm visit the PVP will be required to:
 - leave his/her practice vehicle at the farm entrance and only carry a limited range of equipment into the premises
 - restrict activities on the premises to the examination of the animal(s) in respect of which the call was made.
10. PVPs providing service within the Protection and Surveillance Zones must keep a complete record of all farm visits made within the area, including the date and time of visit, species of animal treated and the nature of the illness.
11. In the unlikely event that a PVP is unwilling or unable to comply with any or all of the above, the authorisation to operate within the infected area will be revoked. The Gardai will be informed immediately. If the PVP refuses to accept the revocation, the SVI in charge at the LDCC should serve a notice under **Article 19** of the Foot and Mouth Disease Order, 1956, restricting the individual to the premises named in the notice.