

## CHAPTER 3

# GOVERNMENT TASK FORCE

## INTRODUCTION

Agri-food is clearly the sector most affected by FMD, whether it is a confirmed outbreak on the island or the threat from one in a neighbouring jurisdiction. However FMD also has significant implications for the wider economy and the public generally.

The Department of Agriculture and Food has primary responsibility for implementing the required veterinary response to deal with FMD. It is the designated Competent Authority under EU legislation. Other Departments and State agencies play vital roles in the efficient and effective management of FMD scenarios as part of the major, multi-faceted national effort required to combat the disease.

1. During the 2001 outbreak, a Government Task Force was established at an early stage to address the question of inter-Department/inter-agency coordination. The Task Force was chaired by An Taoiseach, or in his absence by the Minister for Agriculture and Food, and met early each day during the active part of the campaign, and subsequently as required.
2. The Task Force comprised senior representatives from the following Departments and Agencies:
  - Agriculture and Food
  - An Taoiseach
  - Finance
  - Arts, Sports and Tourism
  - Communications, Marine and Natural Resources
  - Defence
  - Dúchas
  - Enterprise, Trade and Employment
  - Environment and Local Government
  - Foreign Affairs
  - Justice, Equality and Law Reform
  - Transport
  - Defence Forces
  - Garda Síochána
  - Revenue Commissioners (Customs)
  - Aer Rianta
  - Civil Defence

3. The role of the Task Force included mobilisation of resources and the implementation and coordination of appropriate measures.
4. The Task Force received up-to-date briefings on the position from the Minister/DAF and from other ministers, departments and agencies on issues within their areas of responsibilities.
5. It is envisaged that a similar Task Force will be established in the event of any future threat of FMD to the island of Ireland