Avian influenza control and animal welfare

Intergroup on the welfare & conservation of species

EC, DG SANTE – Unit G2 – Animal Health

Outline

- AHL, its scope and relation to animal welfare
- Preventive measures
- Disease control measures
- Zoonoses
- Further initiatives

European Commission

AHL: Fast facts

- ✓**Regulation (EU) 2016/429 on transmissible animal diseases ('Animal Health Law') (AHL)**
- ✓Adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in March **2016**
- ✓Is supplemented by additional rules (delegated and implementing acts)
- ✓ Entered into application on 21 April 2021

European Commission

AHL- What it is about?

About?

- ✓ General principles for **transmissible animal diseases** in:
  - ✓ Kept and wild animals and their products
  - ✓ **Terrestrial**, **Aquatic** and **Other** animals (e.g. reptiles)
- ✓ Animal health rules for:
  - ✓ **Disease prevention**
  - ✓ **Disease surveillance, control and eradication**
  - ✓ **Intra-EU movements and entry into the EU of animals and products**
  - ✓ **Emergency measures**

Not about?

- ✓ Not in scope:
  - ✓ **Animal welfare**
  - ✓ **EU veterinary expenditure (**incl. compensations**)**
  - ✓ **Feed, medicated feed**
  - ✓ **Veterinary medicines (VMP)**
  - ✓ **Veterinary education**
  - ✓ **Official controls**

- ✓ Specific rules remain in place for:
  - ✓**Animal by-products**
  - ✓**TSE rules**
  - ✓**Certain zoonoses**

European Commission

AHL and relation with Animal Welfare

- Animal Welfare: Legislation on animal welfare applies (i.e. Reg. 1/2005, Reg. 1099/2009, etc.)
  - AHL is not interfering with that legislation

- AHL clarifies the relation between animal health and animal welfare:
  - Article 1(2): **any measure applied under AHL** (e.g. disease prevention, control, eradication, etc…) should **take into account the welfare of animals**

European Commission

AHL: important new preventive elements

- ✓ **Responsibilities** of keepers, operators, veterinarians, competent authorities, etc.
- ✓ **Risk based approach** including prioritisation and categorisation of animal diseases for EU intervention
- ✓ **More prevention**
  - ✓ **biosecurity**
  - ✓ **surveillance**
  - ✓ **knowledge on animal health**
  - ✓ **use of vaccines**
  - ✓ **emerging diseases**
  - ✓ **AMR**

European Commission

Basic legal requirements on disease prevention

Operators – Art. 10 & 11 AHL	Veterinarians – Art. 12 AHL	Member States – Art. 13 & 15 AHL	Laboratories – Art. 16 AHL
• Knowledge • Health of animals • Minimize risk of spread diseases • Biosecurity: physical & management measures	• Biosecurity • Early detection • Raising awareness of the risks of animal diseases and their prevention	• Proper administrative capacity • Availability of resources • Laboratories • Inform stakeholders on AH risks • Risk mitigation measures in high risk periods	• Biosecurity, biosafety and bio-containment

European Commission

Preventive measures to avoid introduction and spread of HPAI virus to poultry

OPERATORS

AHL : Art. 10 (1) points (b) and (c)

- **physical protection** measures (e.g. confinement, cleaning/disinfection, etc)
- **management measures** (e.g. procedures for: enter/exit, equipment, movements, etc)

COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

AHL : Art. 55 and 70

Delegated **Regulation** (EU) **2020/687**: Art.63-67

- **Shall** take necessary prevention and control measures following confirmation of HPAI in wild birds
- **May** determine infected zone (risk mitigation and reinforced biosecurity measures, regulate hunting activities, etc.)

European Commission

Why do we need a robust surveillance system for Avian Influenza (AI) as a preventive measure?

- ✓ HPAI is a threat to animal/human health on the whole Union territory
- ✓ Well-proved potential serious economic consequences – direct and indirect
- ✓ A continuously evolving virus – pathogenicity, range of species, transmissibility, potential mutations and re-assortments
- ✓ early warning and early detection system – basic pillar for risk assessment and adaptation of mitigation measures as necessary

AI MEETS ALL CRITERIA FOR THE NEED TO INTRODUCE A HARMONISED SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME AT UNION LEVEL (Union surveillance programme)

- Art. 28 AHL
- Art. 10 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689

European Commission

AI Union surveillance programmes

- Early detection of HPAI **in poultry**
- Early detection of HPAI **in wild birds**: targeted populations in EURL web
- Detection of HPAI in poultry species not showing significant clinical signs: targeted populations defined
- Detection of LPAI that may spread between flocks: targeted populations defined
- Contribution to increase the knowledge of zoonotic risks

European Commission

Main legal framework for EU's harmonised control measures for HPAI

Regulation (EU) 2016/429 ("Animal Health Law" - AHL)

- *Implementing Regulation on **notification** – **2020/2002***

- Primary outbreaks notified within 24 hours in (Animal Disease Information System – ADIS)

- *Delegated Regulation on **surveillance** – **2020/689***

– Early detection of HPAI in wild birds and poultry

- *Delegated Regulation on rules for **prevention** and **control** – **2020/687***
- Commission emergency measures (Art. 259 of AHL) if necessary

– Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/641

European Commission

Harmonized EU disease control measures under AHL

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687

For HPAI, as category A disease, measures for in case of:

- **Suspicion**
- Epidemiological enquiry
- **Confirmation**
- **Establishment of a restricted zone**
- **Measures to be implemented in the restricted zone**
- Repopulation of affected establishments
- Suspicion and confirmation in wild animals

European Commission

Suspicion - obligations on operators

until the competent authority rules out the presence of the disease

- ✓ **Isolate all animals** suspected of being infected with the category A disease;
- ✓ Keep the manure, including litter and used bedding, and any product, material or substance likely to be contaminated with and to transmit category A diseases isolated and protected;
- ✓ Implement the **appropriate additional biosecurity** measures to avoid any risk of spread;
- ✓ **Cease all movements** of kept animals of listed species from or to the establishment;
- ✓ Prevent non-essential movements of animals of non-listed species, products, materials, substances, persons and means of transport from or to the establishment;
- ✓ Ensure that production, health and **traceability records** of the establishment are updated;
- ✓ **Provide the competent authority**, on its request, with any **relevant information** regarding the category A disease; and
- ✓ **Follow any instructions given by the competent authority** regarding the control of the category A disease, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and this Regulation.

European Commission

Suspicion - measures of the competent authority

- ✓ **Immediately conduct an investigation** to confirm or rule out the presence of disease (includes clinical examination and collection of samples by the official veterinarian);
- ✓ Place the establishment under official surveillance and **immediately impose**:
  - prohibition of movements of kept animals into and from the establishment;
  - prohibition of movement of product, material or substance likely to be contaminated;
  - isolation of kept animals and protection from wild animals;
  - prohibition of killing of animals but preventive killing may be ordered if the epidemiological situation so requires;
  - prohibition of non-essential movements of persons, products, materials and means of transport into establishment;

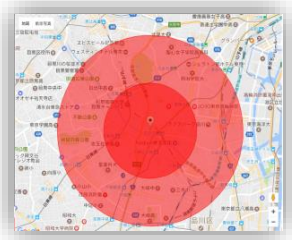
Confirmation - measures in the affected establishment

In addition to measures implemented in the event of suspicion:

- ✓ Killing and disposal of all susceptible animals;
- ✓ Biosecurity measures;
- ✓ Disposal of potentially contaminated products / materials /substances;
- ✓ CA supervise transport in / out;
- ✓ CA carry out sampling for lab testing for the purpose of epidemiological enquiry;

European Commission

Confirmation - restricted zone for HPAI



<u>Established immediately</u> when disease is confirmed**:**

Protection zone (at least 3 km around the outbreak)
+
Surveillance zone (at least 10 km around the outbreak)

if necessary
+
Further restricted zones *(around or adjacent to the protection or surveillance zones)*

European Commission

EU regionalization

- Commission emergency measures based on Article 259 of AHL
- Rapid flow of information between Member States and the Commission
- Urgent adoption of emergency measures
- Agreed with Member States (regular Committees)
- Immediately applicable
- Decisions published in the Official Journal of the European Union

European Commission

EU regionalization for HPAI

- **Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/641** *concerning emergency measures in relation to outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in certain Member States*

  http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2021/641/oj

- **Last amendment**: 16 March2022, Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/454 *amending the Annex to Implementing Decision 2021/641*

  http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2022/454/oj

- Current **EU regionalization includes**:

  Protection, Surveillance and Further restricted zones and validity thereof established by the competent authorities of the Member States that confirmed HPAI outbreaks in poultry or captive birds

European Commission

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

- **specific risk assessments** on request from the Commission
- quarterly **assessment of the epidemiological situation** in EU
- **analyse results of surveillance programmes applied by** Member States
- new **early warning tools**

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/avian-influenza

European Commission

European Union Reference Laboratory (EURL)

- **guidance on the methods** of laboratory analysis, testing or diagnosis, including reference methods
- **provide reference materials** to national reference laboratories (NRLs)
- **assisting actively** in the diagnosis of outbreaks in Member States
- **scientific and technical expertise** and assistance to NRLs
- watching to the correct application of the methods by NRLs by organizing **annual proficiency tests**
- **assess the genetic evolution** of **HPAI viruses and the probability that** any of them **could represent a risk for public health**

https://www.izsvenezie.com/reference-laboratories/avian-influenza-newcastle-disease/

European Commission

Special measures in case of zoonotic strains, emerging risks.....

Immediate applicable rules may be adopted by the Commission by implementing acts for:

- disease prevention and control
- the use of veterinary medicinal products
- additional disease control measures
- coordination of measures
- temporary special disease control rules

European Commission

Future initiatives

- The AHL changes the paradigm and allows for vaccination of animals as a
  - Preventive
  - Emergency vaccination (as a reaction to an outbreak)
- The Commission is working on the delegated act to provide stable legal framework for MSs to use such possibility

European Commission

Areas covered by the future rules for vaccination

- Vaccination **strategies**
- Type of **vaccine** to be used
- Movement **restrictions** and **other risk mitigation** measures
- Reinforced **surveillance** to support disease free status
- **Recovery** period

European Commission

Thank you

© European Union 2020

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the CC BY 4.0 license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

Slide xx: element concerned, source: e.g. Fotolia.com; Slide xx: element concerned, source: e.g. iStock.com

European Commission