

B. ACTIONS TAKEN / TO BE TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO FVO DRAFT REPORT OF 29/01/04

1) Report Summary (1): Page 4

- **Audit of Provinces by CCA** – Please refer to paragraph 28 of this report.
- **Staffing levels** particularly at control level – Please refer to paragraph 25 of this report
- **Staff training** – see paragraph 21 of this report
- **Veterinary Supervision** at export establishments – see paragraph 3 of this report
- **Deficiencies in Certification** process – see paragraph 21 of this report
- **Free availability of drugs** – see paragraph 23 of this report and paragraph 1 of the comments report
- **Lack of control over animal identification** and movement – see paragraph 8.1 of this report.

2) Background (5): Page 7

2.1 Shortage of staff at ostrich establishments for export to the EU – see paragraph 25 of this report

- *The CCA should take all necessary measures to continue to ensure that any shortage of veterinary staff does not negatively influence the supervision of the production of ostrich meat for export to the EU.*

The shortage of veterinary staff at export ostrich establishments, identified during the previous EU mission to South Africa, had been rectified. Veterinary staff at export abattoirs has now also been appointed by Provincial Veterinary Authorities and authorized in terms of the Meat Safety Act 2000 [Act 40 of 2000].

Please also refer to paragraph 2 of the comments report.

2.2 Clarification of tasks and responsibilities of the Provincial Veterinary Services in regard to the export plants

- *The CCA should take all necessary measures to clarify the tasks and responsibilities of the Provincial Veterinary Services in regard to the export plants.*

The tasks and responsibilities of the Provincial Veterinary Services in regard to export plants had been clarified:

In terms of the South African Constitution, abattoirs are classified as a Provincial responsibility. The CCA will compile national legislation, norms and standards in consultation with the CA. The CA is responsible for the implementation of such legislation, norms and standards, which is audited by the CCA.

The CCA is responsible for import and export matters. This includes the guarantees provided to importing countries that the products exported are complying with the importing countries requirements.

Owners of establishments, who want to export, apply to the CA for export approval and they will do the initial inspection to determine whether the establishments are complying with export requirements. If deficiencies are found, the CA will point these out and give advice. If the CA is satisfied that the establishment complies with the export requirements, the application for export approval together with the CA's recommendation will be forwarded to the CCA. The CCA will do the final inspection at the establishment and issue a certificate of export approval and an export number, if they are satisfied that the establishment is complying with the requirements of the importing countries.

The approved export establishment remains the responsibility of the CA who must ensure continued compliance with export requirements. CCA must audit the export establishments on a regular basis to ensure that norms and standards for exports are maintained. If there is any non-compliance, the CA must take immediate steps to rectify or to suspend export certification. If the deficiencies are not addressed adequately, the CCA must be informed to cancel the export approval of the establishment.

2.3 **Export Certification** – Please refer to paragraph 24 of this report.

- *The export certification should only be signed if all the conditions mentioned in the certificate are met.*

This matter has already been addressed as set out in paragraph 21 of this report.

2.4 **Bullet No. 4, Page 7: Swill should be banned for feeding animals**

- *Urgent consideration should be given to the introduction of legislation on swill control. In any case, the use of swill of international origin should immediately be banned for feeding animals.*

Please refer to paragraph 2 of the comments report.

In addition we will issue an official order (according to section 15 of the Act) to all the Ports Authorities (Port Managers) to ensure, in the interest of animal health in South Africa, not to allow any contaminated thing, the definition of which includes swill, to leave the premises under their control. The Ports Authorities must ensure that any swill is destroyed under their supervision.

This will be finalized by 31 March 2004.

Swill management as implemented in the Durban Harbour

Galley Waste Disposal Policy

- All ship galley waste shall be regarded as quarantined type which has a potential to be infectious

- The recycling of all ship galley waste has been terminated with immediate effect.
- Ship galley waste will only be disposed of at a registered, low hazardous landfill site
- Dedicated numbered bins to be used for ship galley waste only
- Bins will have a plastic liner to contain the waste
- Spillage during handling and transportation must be prevented
- All ships galley waste must be placed in trenches and disinfected with lime and covered up with soil at registered low hazardous land fill sites only.
- All dedicated bins to be cleaned and sanitized at the disposal site with an effective sanitizer and water.
- A safe disposal certificate must be obtained for the disposal of all ships galley waste.
- The above-mentioned procedure must be monitored by Risk Management on a regular basis and any deviations rectified immediately.

For your information Article 14 Section 3 as promulgated in terms of the International Health Regulations Act 1974 (Act No. 28 of 1974) is quoted as follows:

“(3) Every port and airport shall also be provided with an effective system for the removal and safe disposal of excrement, refuse, waste water, condemned food and other matters dangerous to Health”.

Precise record is kept of the following:

- The driver removing the waste completes a log sheet with the following information:
 - Time:
 - Bollard No:
 - Ships names:
 - Bin No. In:
 - Bin No. Out
- The full bins numbers ready for disposal are written on the back of the disposal form, checked and signed by the Portnet representative
- The driver proceeds to a registered low hazardous waste removal site, where the disposal form with bin numbers is checked by the waste site and a weighbridge docket is produced.
- The bin liners are sealed and thrown into a hole pre-dug and lined with lime and covered with soil.
- Vehicle is washed in a wash area where the bins, trailer and vehicle are sanitised and washed with a lime solution.
- A safe disposal certificate is issued by the low hazardous landfill site, which is kept as record.
- The drivers original log sheet is finally signed by the Portnet representative.

The system as described above has been in use at the Durban Harbour for a while and seems to be very effective.

This system will be introduced at all the harbour ports of entry by July 2004.

3) Mission Outcome

Competent Authority performance 6.1, Conclusions, Page 7

- **Audit of provinces by CCA** – See paragraph 28 of this report.
- **Staffing levels at central level** – See paragraph 25 of this report.
- **Staff training** – See paragraph 21 of this report.

Findings

- **Bullet No. 1, Page 8**

- *Lines of command and communication between CCA and Provincial Authorities.*

The normal lines of command and communication will be through the offices of the CA and CCA, which have the same status. In the case of national interest e.g. outbreaks of controlled diseases, provision is made for the CCA to issue instructions to the CA, or in the case of a Province not complying or not being able to perform certain tasks, the CCA will perform these tasks to ensure compliance with the requirements of importing countries.

- **Bullet No. 2, Page 8**

- *Auditing of performance of Provincial Authorities.*
See paragraph 28 of this report.

- **Bullet No. 3, Page 8**

- *Supervision of the official veterinarians in export slaughterhouses.*

Historically all the official veterinarians at export abattoirs were employed and supervised by the CCA. Supervision over long distances proved to be difficult and not effective.

Questionnaires were sent to all importing countries on the status of meat inspection and export certification at export establishments. The response from most countries indicated that they were satisfied that the official veterinarian at export abattoirs could be employed by the CCA or CA.

The Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act No. 35 of 1984) and the Meat Safety Act 2000 (Act No. 40 of 2000) make provision for the delegation of functions from the CCA to the CA. It was therefore agreed that the CA would appoint and supervise the official veterinarians at export abattoirs.

This arrangement is still in a transitional stage. In most of the export abattoirs the official veterinarians are appointed and supervised by the CA. The few remaining abattoirs, where the official veterinarians are in the employment of and under the supervision of the CCA, are within close distance of the CCA supervisor.

- **Page 8, Last Paragraph**

- *Staff shortages (veterinarians, animal health technicians and meat inspectors) exist in most areas of the veterinary services but are most acute at the CCA.*
Please refer to paragraph 25 of this report.

- **Competent authority performance 6.1 - Findings**

- Export certification and training**

- i) Export certification VPN's are being updated and expanded.

An Export Certification Policy has been drafted and should be approved by DEXCO (Departmental Executive Committee) by **June 2004**. This is a document that addresses all aspects of export certification and will be issued to veterinary officials in general. – Please refer to paragraph 21 of this report.

- ii) Situation of training at export establishment has already been addressed and is discussed fully in paragraph 21 of this report. The Auditor from the CCA will also monitor the progress of training during his visits to the establishments and this will be included in the audit reports.

The provincial CA had been requested to assist with the training and auditing of progress made, although the CCA will be responsible for the intensified training.

4) Control of exports to the EU (6.4) – Control of Veterinary Drugs, (6.4.1), Page 13,

Please refer to the comments made in the comments report, Paragraph 1.

With reference to the availability of growth promoters in RSA and how to ensure that meat exported to the EU comes from animals that have not been treated with growth promoters. See paragraph 23 of this report.

5) Control of exports to the EU (6.4): Page 13, Point 6.4.1, Paragraph 6

In one slaughterhouse visited, an establishment employee collected all residue samples required for the surveillance programme. This included selection of the animals to be sampled.

The collection of residue samples by an establishment employee was immediately stopped and the samples are now taken by the veterinary official. This will be controlled on a regular basis. This issue and the importance of collecting residue samples according to the programme has already been addressed during training as indicated in paragraph 21, of this report.

6) Page 13, Point 6.4.2 – Approval and registration of farms for export, Paragraph 1

The VPN's addressing farm registration for export will be revised to address the concern of the EU delegation. The VPN's on cattle and sheep will also be separated. **This will be completed in June 2004.**

7) Page 14 – Approval and Registration of farms for export, Point 6.4.2, Bullet No. 1

All game, ostrich and sheep exporting farms are registered annually.

The CCA and the CA are in the process of updating the national register for export farms.

The Provincial Directors were requested to forward all the information on farms registered for export to CCA and to update it on a monthly basis.

An official in the CCA has been tasked to receive this information and to ensure that regular monthly updates are received from all Provinces.

Implemented by 31 March 2004.

8) Page 14, Point 6.4.2, Bullet No. 4

Unique Identification of Cattle

- *No provision is made for the unique identification of cattle intended for slaughter to the EU. As a consequence, it is not possible to audit compliance with EU requirements.*

8.1 The Animal Identification Act 2002 (Act No. 6 of 2002) will be implemented in the **second quarter of 2004**. It will be the responsibility of the veterinary CCA to have it implemented, and the implementation will be done by the CA. The CCA will do the auditing and monitoring to ensure that the act is enforced.

8.2 The Act makes provision for 3 levels of identification as discussed below.

(a) Owner Identification

All commercial cattle, sheep and goats have to be marked with a permanent owner identification mark in terms of the Animal Identification Act, 2002 (Act 6 of 2002). This system provides for a permanent one to three character mark that links the animal to the owner.

The system operates from a central database and can link animals with the farm of origin as well as the current owner.

This system however does not identify individual animals.

(b) Animal Identification

The IRIS / INTERGIS system provides individual animal identification and traceability. Animals are marked by way of a tag – or microchip – and this is linked to a herd identification mark that is currently lodged with the South African Stud Book and Livestock Improvement Association.

Commercial producers can combine the owner identification mark with the individual animal identification mark.

Registered cattle retain the same identification for life. Owner changes are recorded on a control database – linked to IRIS / INTERGIS.

(c) **Full Traceability**

The Lid Cat System and DNA identification system operated by the ARC Animal Improvement Institute provides a service that can extend traceability to products such as meat.

Those requiring full traceability are able to combine individual animal identification with DNA technology.

(d) **Linking all three systems / services**

Current development will link all three levels – thereby providing an integrated identification and traceability service to all stock owners. The level/extent of tracing will depend on where the product is marketed and what the market requirements are. As can be seen, the systems of identification and traceability are developed and available, it is only a question of implementing them and deciding to which level.

8.3 The offer of donors or assistance from the WTO to establish an accredited traceability system will be further investigated. We are grateful for any possible assistance, which has merits to improve the traceability of animals and link it with SACU countries. **It will be completed by 30 April 2004**

Plan of action

- Arrange a meeting with all the role players and establish a working committee to address the issue of traceability in cattle.
It will be completed by 30 April 2004.
- Arrange a meeting with SACU countries to discuss their progress in the development of a traceability system. This is important that our system should be reconcilable with their systems especially for the movement of animals between these countries. We have already consulted Namibia and Botswana in this regard.
It will be completed by 30 April 2004.
- Ask for tenders from consultants to develop, implement, manage and control a traceability system. Suitable for South African conditions.
It will be completed by 31 October 2004.
- Do a cost calculation for presentation to possible donors e.g. the WTO.
It will be completed by 30 November 2004.
- It is not possible to provide the date of implementation of this traceability system at this stage. We will however give the EC the assurance that no beef will be exported to the EU until a proven traceability system is in place.

9) Page 14, Point 6.4.3 – Controls at slaughter, Approval procedures of establishments, Paragraph 1

The certificates of approval for export did not always specify the export markets for which approval had been granted.

This was corrected immediately.

10) Page 15 – Slaughterhouse Arrival Check, Paragraph 2

Given the disclaimer seen on the bags of feed on the sheep farm visited, the freedom of the sheep from residues of growth promotants or β -Agonists, while probable, is not assured.

The freedom of sheep from residues of growth promotants will be assured, by:

- Investigating at feed mills how sheep feed could be containing growth promotants if it was not specifically added. According to the Registrar of Act 36 of 1947 such disclaimers have not been asked for and are also not valid.
It will be completed in June 2004.
- Investigating laboratories that can detect very low levels of growth promotants in feed.
It will be completed in June 2004.
- Investigating the possibility of using urine from live sheep to determine residues of growth promotants. We are already collecting urine samples from cattle, pigs and ostriches for this purpose.
It will be completed in June 2004.
- Taking random feed samples from feed troughs at feedlots and at supplier farms during routine inspections of export farms by the Animal Health Technicians of the CA.
It will be implemented in August 2004.

11) Page 15 – Slaughterhouse Arrival Check, Paragraph 3

Disinfection of Livestock Vehicles

All livestock trucks are now disinfected after washing. This will be monitored by the CCA and the CA when visiting export establishments. Provincial Directors have been instructed to inform all export farms and establishments to ensure that trucks are disinfected, before loading and after offloading of animals. Please also refer to paragraph 18 of this report.

12) Page 16 – Ante and post-mortem examination, First Paragraph, Last Sentence

Hunting teams had not been accompanied by an auxiliary, as a consequence the thoracic organs had not been examined.

Whereas it is true that the auxiliaries had on a few occasions not accompanied the hunting teams last year, the thoracic organs had always been brought to the abattoir and inspected there.

This irregularity was **immediately addressed after the EU briefing** by allocating two more meat inspectors to assist with the field game meat inspection.

13) Page 16, Second Paragraph

Soliped (Zebra) carcasses were not subjected to Trichinella examination.

Since the EU visit, no Zebras have been culled. Quotations have been received and arrangements made with the Port Elizabeth Technicon Bio-laboratories (Tel. 041-504-9103) to do the Trichinella testing.

When culling of Zebras starts in **March 2004**, the necessary samples will be taken for Trichinella testing.

14) Page 16 – Health Marking - General

The irregularities identified and described in this section of the report, **were addressed immediately**. Most of the problems will also be rectified by regular and intensified training and the upgrading of the VPN's as described in paragraph 21 of this actions report.

The required stamps for marking EU eligible carcasses **have been purchased and are being used**.

15) Page 16 – Health Marking, Paragraph 4, Bullet No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

The deficiencies identified by the FVO officials **were addressed immediately** by sending an Official Veterinarian of the CCA to the export establishments to address and rectify the problems. This included training of Provincial Official Veterinarians at the establishments visited.

This will also be further addressed through intensified training as described in paragraph 21 of this action report. Please refer to paragraph 17 of the comments report:

At one establishment visited, a computerized MIS system is used. This system automatically prints 3 stickers with the same serial number:

- Two ZA stickers to be attached on either side of the box
- One sticker that bears the production information and the barcode. The information on this sticker is the same as the information on the sticker that is attached to the meat cuts in the box.

Records are kept by the veterinary official of the number of stickers produced each day in a register. This register shows the first number and the last number of the stickers produced for that particular day of production.

At the other establishments the health marked labels are printed by a private printing company and the labels purchased in numbers of 10 000, with correlative numbers and kept by the State Veterinary Office under lock and key.

The sequence of serial numbers cannot be repeated any more. The registers for health marked labels are in place and kept up to date by the Veterinary Official.

We will ensure that proper supervision and record keeping is maintained by regular audits.

16) Page 17 – Layout and Structure

The cross flow as found in the sheep slaughterhouse was **corrected immediately**.

The problem regarding vermin proofing was **immediately rectified** by placing new gaskets into the doors, to render them vermin proof.

17) Page 17 and 18 – Installation / Equipment and Hygiene – Cattle Slaughterhouse

According to the reports of the Provincial Directors, the observations made in the sheep slaughterhouses and the cattle slaughterhouse have been addressed already, except for the separation screen in the carcass wash facility, which will be installed in **April 2004**. These establishments will be audited in **April 2004** by the CCA.

18) Page 18 – Truck Wash Facilities

The Senior Manager: Animal Health has sent out a letter to Provincial Veterinary Services and export establishments instructing them to disinfect all trucks before departure from export establishments and at export farms before loading the animals. **This has already been implemented**. See paragraph 11 above.

19) Page 18 – Hygiene: Sheep Slaughterhouse

The irregularities identified have all been **rectified immediately**. The Official Veterinarians have been instructed to apply the required standards and to monitor compliance at all times. The next audit of this establishment will be in **April 2004**.

20) Page 18 – Hygiene – Wild Game Establishment

- *A significant number of carcasses were contaminated with hair.*

As a rule we do not wash carcasses. We have however changed the slaughter technique in an attempt to address this problem. We are now hanging the carcasses by the fore legs when skinning, instead of hind legs. This technique is proving to be better in terms of hair contamination.

- *“Very untidy and dusty dry goods storage room”*
This has already been addressed.
- *“Ponding of water in packing room”*

We are using brooms to sweep the water towards the drain. The establishment will make alterations to the floor. **April 2004**.

21) Page 20, Point 6.6 – Certification including training

Please also refer to paragraph 24 of this report.

The deficiencies found in the certification procedure at some of the export establishments visited, were not the general tendency at all the establishments. These problems **were addressed immediately** by sending an Official Veterinarian of the CCA to the export establishments to address and rectify the problems. This included training of Provincial Official Veterinarians at the establishments visited.

The implementation of intensified training and the updating of the VPN's will address most of the problems encountered. Updating of VPN's will be completed by **June 2004**.

The Export Certification Policy as described in paragraph 3 has been incorporated into the Strategic Plan of the NDA. It should be approved by DEXCO by **June 2004**.

A training schedule has been compiled by the section responsible for training of the CCA.

a) The training will include:

- Basic knowledge and understanding on export certification and record keeping.
- Functions, responsibilities and authorities of Official State Veterinarians and Meat inspection Staff
- Role of the CCA on export certification negotiations
- Distribution of relevant Council Directives
- Verification of Hygiene Management Systems and HACCP
- Importance of collecting residue samples

Monitoring and auditing by the CCA will be performed on a regular basis.

b) Training material to be used:

- VPN/2002/17
Principles of Certification
- NDA Export Certification protocol
- Roles and responsibilities for the delivery of Veterinary Services in SA (October 2003)
OIE – Animal Health Code
Chapter 1.3.4
Guidelines for the evaluation of Veterinary Services
- Other important information on an ad hoc basis.

c) Training Schedules:

The export abattoirs have been divided into 4 areas

- Area I – Gauteng
- Area II – Northern Cape
- Area III – Eastern Cape
- Area IV – Western Cape

The timeframe for this training will be as follows:

2-5 March 2004 - Training Session / Workshop for Region III – Eastern Cape Province

- To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 5-8 April 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region I – Gauteng Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 3-6 May 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region III – Northern Cape Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 8-11 June 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region III – Western Cape Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.

Training new officials immediately before starting employment at an export establishment and continuous training on export certification, **has already been implemented.**

22) Page 21, Point 8 – Recommendations, Paragraph 8.1.1

To implement systems for the control of production of cattle intended for slaughter for export to the EU so as to be able to verify and guarantee that EU requirements are complied with.

The plan of action will be:

- (a) First draft a detailed VPN in accordance with the EU requirements to address the following matters:
- Identification of all role players
 - Identification of the different steps to be taken
 - Registration of farms
 - Identification of animals
 - Traceability of animals
 - Guarantees that no growth stimulants are used
 - Agreement with owner
 - Auditing and monitoring by the CCA and CA.

The VPN's must also include the feedlots. After drafting the VPN, it will be sent to role-players for comments and final approval. **This will be completed by September 2004.**

- (b) VPN on the registration of cattle farms for export of beef to the EU will be updated. This will include the agreements with the owners of registered farms and guarantees that no growth stimulants will be used. **To be completed by June 2004.**
- (c) The implementation of traceability as discussed under paragraph 8 of this report will be the next step. Implementation date of traceability will determine the rest of the action plan.

- (d) The next step will be the registration of cattle farms for export of beef to the EU.
- (e) Draft and implement a residue monitoring programme on the farms as well as at the abattoirs to ensure compliance with EU requirements.
- (f) Plan and implement monitoring and auditing of export registered farms by CA and CCA.
- (g) Inform the EU that all the required systems for export of beef are in place, have been tested and that the necessary guarantees for such exports can be supplied.
- (h) Confirm export health certificate for beef with the EU.
- (i) Resume exports of beef to the EU.

23) Page 21, Point 8.1.2

To clarify how the SA Competent Authority intend to ensure that meat exported to the EU comes from animals that have not been treated with growth promoters.

The plan of action is the following:

- (a) Draft and finalise a separate VPN for the registration of sheep farms for export to the EU. This will include signed declarations by the owners of these farms that they undertake not to use or administer production enhancers / growth stimulants or any substance that is a β -Agonist or has an oestrogenic, androgenic, gestagenic or thyrostatic effect. **This will be completed in June 2004.**
- (b) Update the existing VPN for the registration of ostrich farms for export to the EU. It makes provision for signed declarations by the owners of these farms that they undertake not to use or administer production enhancers / growth stimulants or any substance that is a β -Agonist or has an oestrogenic, androgenic, gestagenic or thyrostatic effect. **This will be completed in June 2004.**
- (c) Urine of ostriches is collected for the determination of growth promotants.
- (d) See **Slaughterhouse Arrival Check** under paragraph 10 of this report.

The freedom of sheep from residues of growth promotants will be assured, by:

- Investigating at feed mills how sheep feed could be containing growth promotants if it was not specifically added. According to the Registrar of Act 36 of 1947 such disclaimers have not been asked for and are also not valid.
This will be completed in June 2004.
- Investigating laboratories that can detect very low levels of growth promotants in feed.
This will be completed in June 2004.

- Investigating the possibility of using urine from live sheep to determine residues of growth promotants. We are already collecting urine samples from cattle, pigs and ostriches for this purpose. **This will be completed in June 2004.**
 - Taking random feed samples from feed troughs at feedlots and at supplier farms during routine inspections of export farms by the Animal Health Technicians of the CA. **This will be implemented in August 2004.**
- (e) The residue monitoring programme at export approved abattoirs is ongoing.
- (f) Arrange a meeting with Organised Agriculture and other role players to decide on the availability, distribution and control of growth promotants in the RSA in future. **This meeting is scheduled for May 2004.**

24) Page 21, Point 8.1.3 – Export Certification

To correct the deficiencies detected in the system for export certification such, that all certificates are issued in compliance with requirements that are at least equivalent to those specified in Council Directive 96/93/EC.

- (a) The official veterinarians in charge of the approved export cold stores, will be the only officials to issue and sign export health certification. **Already implemented.**
- (b) The exporters and their agents were informed that no export health certificates will be issued in retrospect. Exporters must apply, 5 working days in advance for export health certificates. **Already implemented.**
- (c) The date of dispatch of a consignment must be indicated on the export health certificate. **Already implemented.**
- (d) All certifying officials CA and CCA were instructed to forward copies of all export certificates to the CCA for auditing at the end of every month. An official was already tasked to receive and audit the export health certificates and to take the necessary actions to ensure correct certification.
Implementation date: 31 March 2004.
- (e) Training of new officials before starting employment at export establishments. **Already implemented.**
- (f) Continuous training on export certification. **Already implemented.**
- (g) In addition to the above the following actions will be implemented:
- The relevant VPN's will be supplied to every official veterinarian at export establishments who will have to acknowledge receipt by signing for it.
 - Non-compliance with the guidelines and VPN's on export certification due to negligence will result in disciplinary steps being taken by the SAVC.
 - The OIE principles of ethical certification will be included in the updated VPN on export certification.
Date of implementation: July 2004.

25) Page 21, Point 8.1.4 – Sufficient Staff

To take action to ensure that sufficient staff are available at all levels of the Veterinary Services

Post mentioned are:

- State Veterinarians
- Animal Health Technicians
- Veterinary Technologists
- Meat Inspectors

At this stage, sufficient Animal Health Technicians and Meat Inspectors are available in SA. Our main concern is the Veterinarians and Veterinary Laboratory Technologists.

Action Plan

(a) The Provincial Veterinary Directors have been requested to supply the CCA with the number of filled and vacant posts of the post categories as indicated above, to be tabled at the ITCA Veterinary Work Group Meetings of:

- **4 March 2004**
- **22 June 2004**
- **12 August 2004**
- **14 October 2004**

After discussion at these meetings, the information will be conveyed to ITCA, which is attended by Director-General of NDA and the Heads of Departments of the Provinces for further action.

- (b) A policy document on the Recruitment and Retention of State Veterinarians is in process and will be completed by **April 2004**. This document addresses subjects like better payment and career opportunities, recruitment of veterinarians in foreign countries and compulsory community service for veterinary graduates, etc. An action plan for the implementation of this policy can only be compiled after discussion with all the role players and approval by the Minister of Agriculture.
- (c) Thirty additional bursaries for veterinary students were advertised and 18 were already awarded to date. Every year 30 new bursaries will be made available for veterinary students.
- (d) As an interim measure a number of private practitioners are employed as state veterinarians on a part time basis.
- (e) The CCA will investigate the possibility of making bursaries available to Veterinary Laboratory Technologists, and to ensure sufficient training posts at the various veterinary laboratories. To be discussed at the ITCA Veterinary Work Group Meeting of **22 June 2004**.

26) Page 21, Point No. 8.1.5 – This should be read with point 8.1.3 and Point 6.6

To improve the training of official veterinarians in meat producing establishments.

Also refer to paragraphs 21 and 24 of this action document.

Action Plan

The implementation of intensified training and the updating of the VPN's will address most of the problems encountered. Updating of VPN's will be completed by **June 2004**.

The Export Certification Policy as described in paragraph 3 has been incorporated into the Strategic Plan of the NDA. It should be approved by DEXCO by **June 2004**.

A training schedule has been compiled by the section responsible for training of the CCA.

a) The training will include:

- Basic knowledge and understanding on export certification and record keeping.
- Functions, responsibilities and authorities of Official State Veterinarians and Meat inspection Staff
- Role of the CCA on export certification negotiations
- Distribution of relevant Council Directives
- Verification of Hygiene Management Systems and HACCP
- Importance of collecting residue samples

Monitoring and auditing by the CCA will be performed on a regular basis.

b) Training material to be used:

- VPN/2002/17
Principles of Certification
- NDA Export Certification protocol
- Roles and responsibilities for the delivery of Veterinary Services in SA (October 2003)
OIE – Animal Health Code
Chapter 1.3.4
Guidelines for the evaluation of Veterinary Services
- Other important information on an ad hoc basis.

c) Training Schedules:

The export abattoirs have been divided into 4 areas

- Area I – Gauteng
- Area II – Northern Cape
- Area III – Eastern Cape
- Area IV – Western Cape

The timeframe for this training will be as follows:

2-5 March 2004 - Training Session / Workshop for Region III –

- Eastern Cape Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 5-8 April 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region I – Gauteng Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 3-6 May 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region III – Northern Cape Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.
- 8-11 June 2004** - Training Session / Workshop for Region III – Western Cape Province
To include all state veterinarians and relief personnel.

Training new officials immediately before starting employment at an export establishment and continuous training on export certification, **has already been implemented.**

27) Page 21, Point 8.1.6 – VPN System

To further develop the VPN system of staff instructions particularly with regard to the veterinary supervision of export meat establishments.

Please refer to the paragraph 3 of this action report.

VPN regarding veterinary supervision of export meat establishments to be completed in **August 2004.**

28) Page 21, Point 8.1.7 – Re-organization of the Veterinary Services

To complete the reorganisation of the veterinary services, whilst ensuring effective co-ordination and developing a system for internal audit, particularly in relation to Provinces.

Auditing of the CA by the CCA

The CCA is in the process of restructuring. Sufficient veterinary posts were approved. It may take time to appoint experienced officials who can audit the implementation of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act No. 35 of 1984) in the Provinces. It was therefore decided to appoint experienced retired veterinary officials on a contract basis to do the auditing in the Provinces and to act as mentors for young officials.

Date of implementation on 3rd May 2004.

Auditing

- (a) Seven posts for Chief and Senior State Veterinarians were advertised by CCA. The closing date for applications is 8 March 2004. Interviews scheduled for 23-26 March 2004. Successful candidates to assume their duties on **3 May 2004.**

- (b) One of the most experienced Chief State Veterinarians will be assigned to manage and coordinate the auditing process. This will include the recruitment and training of veterinary auditors. **Implementation date: 3 May 2004**
- (c) The abattoir contract of the veterinary auditor mentioned in the EU report expires on **30 April 2004**. A new contract specifically for auditing export establishments is in process. A pre-determined auditing program at export establishments will be included in the contract. **Implementation date is 3 May 2004.**
- (d) Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape Provinces do auditing across their borders. Other Provinces were requested to do the same and to supply a progress report by **22 June 2004**. This action is in addition to the auditing done by the CCA in the Provinces and will not replace it.
- (e) Auditing of export certification
 - e.1 The official veterinarians in charge of the approved export cold stores will be the only officials to issue and sign export health certificates. **Already implemented.**
 - e.2 The exporters and their agents were informed that no export health certificates will be issued in retrospect. Exporters must apply 5 working days in advance for export health certificates. **Already implemented.**
 - e.3 The date of dispatch of a consignment must be indicated on the export health certificate. **Already implemented.**
 - e.4 All certifying officials CA and CCA were instructed to forward copies of all export health certificates to the CCA for auditing at the end of every month. An official was already tasked to receive and audit the export health certificates and to take the necessary action to ensure correct certification. **Date of implementation: 31 March 2004.**

29) Page 22, Point 8.1.8

To correct the deficiencies detected in the establishments visited, and to ensure correction of similar deficiencies in other establishments, approved for the export of meat of the EU.

The Provincial Directors reported that the deficiencies detected in the establishments visited were rectified. This will be confirmed through auditing by the CCA in **April 2004**.

The Provincial Directors were requested to provide status reports on and action plans to address possible similar deficiencies in other establishments approved for export of meat to the EU by **22 June 2004**.