MEMO/05/304

Brussels, 7 September 2005

Guidelines for Member States enhanced surveillance for avian influenza viruses in wild birds in the European Union – September 2005 to January 2006[1]

Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health - Working group meeting on avian influenza surveillance in wild birds - 6 September 2005

1. Survey design:

1. A. Active surveillance on living or hunted birds

- identify **species of wild birds presenting higher risk** based upon: i) origin and migratory flyways, ii) numbers in the EU and iii) likelihood of contact with domestic poultry. The Annexed list of higher risk species must be taken into account, but must be considered provisional;
- identify **sites at risk** based upon: i) mixing sites of high number of migratory birds involving different species and in particular those listed in the Annex ii) proximity to domestic poultry farms, and iii) location along migratory flyways;
- sampling must take account of the **seasonality** of migration patterns (these may vary in different Member States).

1. B. Passive surveillance on wild birds found dead

- should primarily target the **occurrence of abnormal mortality** or significant disease outbreaks in: i) wild birds species indicated in the Annex and other wild birds living in contact with them, and ii) at sites as indicated above. The occurrence of mortality in several species at the same site would be an additional factor to consider.

2. Sampling procedures and testing

- In addition to cloacal swabs or faeces, tissues (i.e. brain, heart, lung, kidney and intestine) from birds found dead or shot should also be sampled for virus isolation and molecular detection (PCR). Molecular techniques should only be carried out in laboratories able to guarantee quality assurance and using methods recognised by the Community Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza;
- Pooling of up to five samples from the same species collected at the same site and same time is possible

Collaboration and coordination between veterinary authorities, epidemiologists, laboratory experts and ornithological institutions at EU level should be reinforced. The Commission and the Member States should explore all means to reach this goal, with special emphasis on bringing together existing expertise in the relevant fields with the objective of establishing an EU surveillance network.

Annex

Provisional list of wild bird species presenting higher risk in relation to avian influenza (Latin and English names)[2]

	Latin name	English name
1.	*Anser albifrons*	White-fronted Goose
2.	*Anser fabalis*	Bean Goose
3.	*Anas platyrhynchos*	Mallard
4.	*Anas strepera*	Gadwal
5.	*Anas acuta*	Northern Pintail
6.	*Anas clypeata*	Northern Shoveler
7.	*Anas Penelope*	Eurasian Wigeon
8.	*Anas crecca*	Common teal
9.	*Anas querquedula*	Garganay
10.	*Aythya ferina*	Common Pochard
11.	*Aythya fuligula*	Tufted Duck
12.	*Vanellus vanellus*	Northern Lapwing
13.	*Philomachus pugnax*	Ruff
14.	*Larus ribibundus*	Black-headed Gull
15.	*Larus canus*	Common Gull

1 These guidelines must be considered as additional to those laid down in point D of the Annex to Commission Decision 2005/464/EC, to take into account the potential spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza virus H5N1 from Asia via migratory birds.

2 All naturally occurring wild birds species in the EU including the above listed species fall under the protection regime of Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and therefore full regard should be taken of the requirements of this Directive in any surveillance for Avian Influenza.