



Meeting: Bovine TB Stakeholder Forum Implementation Working Group (IWG) – Meeting 2.
Date: 13 April 2021.
Time: 11:00 – 13:00.
Location: Virtual Meeting.
Purpose: The stated purpose of the IWG is to consider the details and modalities for the policies set out in the bTB strategy.

Attendees

Chair of the Implementation Working Group:

Sean Brady.

Chair of the bovine Tb Stakeholder Forum:

Michael Cronin.

Organisations:

Lorcan McCabe, Paul Smyth, ICMSA; Hugh Farrell, Neassa Fitzgibbon, ICOSA; Ray Doyle, ICOS; Pat Farrell, TJ Maher, IFA; Thomas Duffy, Macra na Feirme; Kevin Twomey, Farmer, Mike Magan, Farmer; Conor Geraghty, Tadgh Gavin, Veterinary Ireland.

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM):

Eoin Ryan, Philip Breslin, Karina Wrigley, James O' Keeffe.

Bovine TB Forum Secretariat:

Rosanne Greene, Anthony Stringer.

Apologies:

Claire Crowley, NPWS; Deborah Meghen, Coilte.

Minutes

Item	Minutes
Introduction by Chair Sean Brady.	The Chair welcomed all representatives to the second meeting of the Implementation Working Group (IWG).
Minutes of last meeting	The minutes of the last meeting were not agreed by all. The Farm Organisations said they had not agreed to implement the inconclusive policy. Concern was also expressed over the lack of communication with the IWG and farmers prior to the roll out of the policy. DAFM made the point that the letter which is to be sent to all herdowners with newly disclosed inconclusives was shared with the IWG members and was the subject of discussion at the last meeting. DAFM re-iterated that the inconclusive policy was to be implemented as set out in the agreed TB Strategy and this was recently endorsed by the TB Forum. The stated purpose of the IWG is to advise on how the strategy is implemented not whether the strategy would be implemented. Data from the implementation of the inconclusive policy will be used to inform further discussions at the TB Forum on possible enhancements to the inconclusive

	<p>policy. The importance of effective communication to farmers and to stakeholders was emphasised. DAFM welcomed the feedback on communication and agreed to discuss communications further at the next IWG meeting. The Chair asked to move the meeting forward and noted the dispute of the minutes.</p>
<p>Statistical overview</p>	<p>Eoin Ryan provided a presentation on the current bTb disease trends. The presentation is attached.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  TB IWG Disease Trends Update April 2 </div> <p>Herd incidence was 4.18% in the 12 months to 4th April 2021. The Chair expressed concern in relation to the 1,946 herds currently restricted and the suffering of farm families affected by this; other members of the group agreed.</p>
<p>EU Animal Health Law (AHL) pre/post movement test</p>	<p>The requirements are that animals moving into herds and the herds from which they are moving must have been tested in the last 6 months, if not, a 30 day pre or post movement test is required. DAFM will use a phased approach in implementing the requirements. It would initially apply to animals moving from herds with a herd risk category of CO, C1, C2 and C3. The approximate date of implementation of the phased in approach is Q3 of 2021. There is currently no date for application to other herd categories, but DAFM confirmed that these provisions will be applicable to all herds in time, following a phased implementation period. A communication strategy will be developed to inform farmers of this requirement in advance of the changes. DAFM does not expect to pay for the pre or post movement test required under this legislation. If a herdowner purchases an animal which is required to have a post-movement test, they will be informed by DAFM through SMS, letter or electronically. If a herd does not test such an animal within 30 days of its inward movement, the herd will be restricted on day 31. The herd will be de-restricted by testing the animal. The farming organisations stated that DAFM should pay for all pre/post movement tests required under the AHL. A request was made that issue of payment for these tests be brought to the Financial Working Group (FWG). An analysis on pre movement testing in Ireland had been carried out in 2008; it was requested that this be shared with the group; DAFM agreed, and stated this had previously been shared with farm organisations by DAFM when the regulations were under negotiation. Please see Clegg et al: <i>Potential infection-control benefit for Ireland from pre-movement testing of cattle for tuberculosis, Preventive Veterinary Medicine, 2008, 84 (94-111)</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  Article.pdf </div>
<p>EU Animal Health Law movements into restricted herds conditions.</p>	<p>The conditions which currently apply to moving cattle into a restricted herd under the current permit system (known as an ER37G permit) will apply, with the change that instead of having to complete one clear herd test, risk mitigation measures must be carried out by the herdowner. The conditions currently applicable for ER37G movements into restricted herds are that moving animals in on this basis will forfeit on-farm market valuation (OFMV) on animals moved in and all Income Supplement or Hardship grant payments will cease. The risk mitigation measures will be herd specific and will be proportionate to the risk.</p> <p>The farm organisations welcomed this change as a positive development. It was recognised that the proposal is a more business friendly approach than having to have one clear test in order to buy in animals. Farm organisations proposed a variance from replicating the current ER37G conditions such that moved in animals should be eligible for OFMV. DAFM indicated they would consider further and would bring the proposal to the FWG.</p>

Closing of meeting	The Chair noted that on account of the time spent on the minutes the other agenda items would be moved forward to the next meeting. He thanked all the representatives for their valuable contribution.
Date of next meeting	Next IWG meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 11 May 2021 @ 11 AM.

Action Points

1	More information is to be provided by DAFM in relation to the proposals under the new AHL, including details on how the policies will be implemented and examples of how these will apply to different farm enterprises.
2	Issue of payment for pre/post movement tests and of OFMV eligibility on animals moved into a herd during restrictions to be developed further by DAFM and brought to FWG.
3	The topic of wildlife will be brought forward to the next meeting.
4	Details on the wildlife programme staff per RVO were requested to be circulated prior to the next meeting.
5	The scientific paper evaluating the use of pre-movement testing in Ireland is to be circulated to the group.
6	DAFM is to provide statistics on cattle removed from farms with compensation under the new inconclusive policy.
7	The topic of communications on TB will be added to the agenda of the next meeting.