



Meeting: Bovine TB Stakeholder Forum Implementation Working Group (IWG) – Meeting 18.

Date: 03 August 2022

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:

Sean Brady

Chair TB Forum:

Michael Cronin

Organisations:

Des Morrison, Alisha Ryan ICMSA; Hugh Farrell, John Barron, ICSA; Ray Doyle, James O'Donnell, ICOS; TJ Maher, Anna Daly, IFA; James Lynch, David Graham AHI; John Keane, Macra na Feirme, Michael Sexton, Veterinary Ireland; Niall Feery, NPWS.

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

Damien Barrett, Conor O'Mahony, Philip Breslin, Rosanne Greene, James O'Keefe, Karina Wrigley.

Bovine TB Forum Secretariat:

Donal Mooney, Anthony Stringer.

Apologies:

Claire Crowley NPWS; Padraic Fogarty Irish Wildlife Trust; Tadgh Gavin, Conor Geraghty, Veterinary Ireland; Deborah Megan, Coillte.

Minutes

Item	Minutes
Introduction by Chair	The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting and thanked everyone for their time and contribution.
Minutes of last meeting	The minutes of meeting 17 were agreed.
TB Resistance in Bulls	Siobhan Ring (ICBF) gave a presentation on breeding for bTb resistance in cattle and this generated a lot of positive discussion.
Disease Trends	The Department gave an update on current Tb disease trends and talked about the disturbance of badger habitats and the connection to TB breakdowns. On foot of a question from the chair on what he considered the most important factor in achieving TB eradication, DB said he felt stakeholder engagement and co-operation was crucial.
Communications	The Department gave an update on communications since the last IWG meeting. The next Communications Sub-Group meeting will take place mid-September and will be focused on Animal Health Law testing communications.

Wildlife Update	There will be a heavy focus on planning meetings in the RVOs with the wildlife teams in the coming period. These meetings will discuss the badger protect scheme; a partnership with farmers to deploy cages on their land to capture badgers and vaccinate them. The procurement process is currently ongoing. Recruitment challenges and the current vacancies of the wildlife programme were discussed. The number of badgers captured to date in culling zones is 3,493, down 400 from last year. The number of badgers captured in vaccination zones to date is 4,582, down 20 from last year. It can be difficult to get activity in certain areas. Areas with increased culling can have an impact along with dry weather. The badger activity app is still getting notifications. There will be a re-advertisement of the app in September before the start of the season. There will be an update on the Irish Deer Management Forum at the next IWG meeting.
Risk Mitigation Plans	The Department gave a presentation on Risk Mitigation Plans and the proposed updates to the policy. The group were asked to email DAFM with any comments on the proposals.
Any other business	There will be a TB Forum meeting in September or October.
Date of next meeting	06 September 2022 11 AM – online through Cisco WebEx

Action Points

1	DAFM to circulate all presentations from today's meeting.
2	Siobhan Ring to forward correlations between TB resistance and other merits/traits.
3	Farming organisations advised to place the recently circulated Reactor Pack Flow Chart and FAQs on their websites.
4	Any observations on Risk Mitigation Plans are to be sent to ERAD@agriculture.gov.ie