

Notification by Members to the OIE, WAHIS and WAHID

**Veterinary Authority Vs Competent Authority:
Challenges**

**OIE regional training seminar for focal points
aquatic animals**

Dr Albertina Shilongo
OIE Delegate for Namibia
Directorate of Veterinary Services
Namibia
imports@dvs.org.na

Background

DEFINITION: Competent Authority: Terrestrial Code

- means the [Veterinary Authority](#) or other Governmental Authority of an OIE Member having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and [welfare](#) measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the [Terrestrial Code](#) in the whole territory.

Background

DEFINITION: Veterinary Authority: Terrestrial Code

- means the Governmental Authority of an OIE Member, comprising [veterinarians](#), other professionals and para-professionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and [welfare](#) measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the [Terrestrial Code](#) in the whole territory.

Background

DEFINITION: Competent Authority: Aquatic code

- means the [Veterinary Services](#), or other Authority of a Member, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of the [aquatic animal](#) health measures or other standards in the [Aquatic Code](#).

Background

DEFINITION: Veterinary Authority: Aquatic Code

- means the Governmental Authority of an OIE Member, comprising [veterinarians](#), other professionals and para-professionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of [aquatic animal](#) health and welfare measures, international [aquatic animal](#) health certification and other standards and recommendations in the [Aquatic Code](#) in the whole [territory](#).

Notification: Terrestrial code

means the procedure by which:

- the [Veterinary Authority](#) informs the [Central Bureau](#),
- the [Central Bureau](#) informs [Veterinary Authority of OIE members](#),
- of the occurrence of an [outbreak of disease or infection](#), according to the provisions of Chapter [1.1](#), of the [Terrestrial Code](#).

Notification: Aquatic Code

means the procedure by which:

- the [Veterinary Authority](#) informs the [Central Bureau](#),
- the [Central Bureau](#) informs [Veterinary Authorities](#) of OIE Members
- of the confirmation of a [disease outbreak](#), according to the provisions of Section 1. of the [Aquatic Code](#).

Challenges for reporting: VA Capacity

- Obligations for reporting to the OIE rests with the [Veterinary Authority](#) BUT:
 - Veterinary schools in many countries do not provide for example adequate training in aquatic and wild life diseases (including farmed game: e.g. ostriches, crocodiles)
 - Most Veterinary Services employ veterinarians who are usually only specialized in domestic animal health issues
 - Capacity to train or recruit specialists trained in many different fields is not possible due to resource limitations

Challenges for Reporting: VA Capacity

- Therefore VA may not have the necessary competence-e.g. fish, wildlife diseases, bees, mollusks, entomology, ornithology and other biological sciences
- However VA are required to report to OIE on behalf of other CA
- How does one “competently” report on a subject matter one is not too familiar with?

Challenges for reporting: Different Sources of Data

- Information reported to OIE comes from different organisations and ministries or agencies within the government: e.g. other ministries responsible for
 - Fisheries: reporting fish diseases
 - Environment, conservation: wildlife diseases
 - Health : zoonotic diseases, food safety
 - local authorities: in charge of local abattoirs, zoonoses
- VA may not have the power/authority to ensure that reports are channeled to it from the different sources.
- Has to rely on good will of colleagues- if there is!
- Linkages between VA and all these organizations may be weak or none existent

Suggested solutions to the challenges

- OIE to widen involvement of other CA and giving them full participation in its activities
- Veterinary Authorities to foster good working rapport and linkages with other CA in respective countries
- Legislate? VA to be given legal mandate to ensure compliance by CA for reporting purposes
- Vet Schools to widen training for vets to cover e.g. fish, bees, etc
- Vet Services to have strong continuing education to widen veterinarians skills

Suggested solutions to the challenges

- Vet Services to consider employing specialists in different areas where feasible
- An assessment how much information from each of the CA does reach the VA for reporting purposes to the OIE may need to be done:
 - Identify the gaps and find ways of tackling them
- Clear guidelines on reporting within countries to be formulated and agreed among stakeholders

Conclusion

- Reporting to the OIE is important to facilitate safe trade in animals and animals products
- However, how sure are we that all the information required for reporting is reaching the OIE?
- If not, what can be done to ensure this happens?

- Thank You Very Much!!!
- Muchisima Gracias!!!
- Tangi Unene!!!