

FOR INFORMATION

NSDIP Advisory Committee Annual Meeting 2021

Agenda Item 2.1

Last updated: **16 November 2021**

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NATIONAL SIGNIFICANT DISEASE INVESTIGATION PROGRAM (NSDIP) REPORT FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA 01-07-2020 TO 30-06-2021**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the NSDIP Advisory Committee note and accept Western Australia's report.

BACKGROUND

2. The Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) values a strong relationship with rural private veterinarians to assist with the reporting and investigation of significant livestock disease events to support early detection of a notifiable disease and provide evidence of absence of trade sensitive diseases. The NSDIP is an important contributing funding source for disease investigations in WA and (DPIRD) uses these funds to provide technical support and financial subsidies to private veterinary practitioners to investigate cases of significant disease and unusual behavior in livestock.

DISCUSSION

3. In 2020/2021, 119 cases were accepted for a subsidised disease investigation from 26 different veterinary businesses. This was a slight decrease from last year. Reportable diseases for on a syndromic basis resulted in 105 reportable disease exclusions from 59 submissions.

DPIRD conducted a livestock disease investigation workshop in May 2021 that targeted mixed practice veterinarians. 32 private vets and 2 DAWE vets attended the workshop. The workshop was carried out over 2 days. A practical postmortem session was held on the first day which attracted 17 participants. The second day of the workshop was a series of presentations and interactive sessions focusing on surveillance, epidemiology, exotic diseases, and disease investigation case presentations. The second day was attended by 27 guests.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. Subsidized significant disease investigations carried out by private veterinary practitioners incurred a total cost of ~\$223 278. In total veterinarians were paid \$39 142 for their disease investigations and the subsidized laboratory fees for these investigations totaled ~\$184 136 at an average of ~\$1547 per case for lab fees.
NSDIP supported funding for 11 of the 119 cases. These cases were entered into NSDIP. This accounted for ~8% of WA DPIRD's expenditure for significant livestock disease investigation by private vets. NSDPI funding was not utilized for the diagnostic workshop for private vets.

DPIRD currently provides a travel subsidy for up to 100km each way for investigations. This limits the investigations of veterinary practises to properties within a 100km radius. Greater funding in the NABS program (\$2,000 per case to veterinarians) has encouraged submissions from vets from a bigger area. A greater level of funding for more remote locations would enable SDI to have a greater reach.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

5. The Significant Disease Investigation program relies on established relationships between veterinarians, producers, and DPIRD officers to operate effectively. DPIRD Field veterinarians have regular communication with regional veterinarians to promote and approve significant disease investigations. Informal feedback on the quality of sampling occurs with the submitting vets directly through the DPIRD field vets and the DPIRD laboratory case managers.

The SDI program is promoted at veterinary workshops/seminars hosted by DPIRD and is promoted to producers at field days, producer groups and meetings. The SDI program is promoted in quarterly newsletters to vets and producers.

NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS

6. WA will continue to promote and facilitate investigations under the Significant Disease Investigation program, for which important funding is received from the NSDIP.

In 2022, WA DPIRD plans to conduct a central seminar/workshop in Perth for peri-urban veterinary practices and 3 regional seminars/workshops in Albany, Bunbury and Dongara/Geraldton. These workshops will be funded using WA DPIRD's funding for SDI activities in WA.

WA supports NSDI continuing and for funding to continue to be used to subsidise livestock disease investigations by private vets.

WA would support a recommendation for higher level of funding per case for remote areas in southern areas to increase the reach of NSDI.

FEEDBACK

7. *[Please respond to the questions below in assessing the performance of the NAHIP over the 2020–21 year, and use this as an opportunity to offer feedback and suggested changes for continual improvement.]*

Q1 My organisation's needs and expectations of the NSDIP are being met.				
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The level of funding available through NSDI is inadequate to promote this program widely from this funding source alone. Subsidy for additional mileage may enhance travel scope for more remote submissions. A higher travel allowance (e.g. a higher rate per km) may also enhance the quality of disease investigations by encouraging vets to travel to the property rather than perform post mortems at the clinic.				

Q2 The National Significant Disease Investigation Program has provided opportunities to private veterinarians for gaining the necessary knowledge and skills to investigate and report on disease events.				
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The objectives of the NSDI are consistent with any WA activity and the national nature of the program supports the recognition and promotion of the activity internally within DPIRD and externally with veterinarians and producers.				

Q3 The National Significant Disease Investigation Program has helped to improve the level of notifiable disease investigations through effective engagement with private veterinarians and assisting in funding investigations that may not have progressed otherwise.				
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Recognition of and the credibility of the national SDIP is high amongst rural veterinary practitioners. Many rural practitioners promote disease investigation as doing the right thing by Australia and their industry even when the financial imperatives of a disease investigation do not seem urgent to a producer.				