

FOR DISCUSSION

NAMP Technical Committee Annual Meeting 2021

Agenda Item 6.2

Last updated: 9 August 2021

Prepared by B. Loecker

CHANGES SUGGESTED TO OPERATIONS PLAN**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the NAMP Technical Committee DISCUSS changes suggested and questions of the operations plan.

BACKGROUND

2. *Some of our operational instructions and procedures may vary from what is stated in the Operations plan. Discussion would be helpful to clarify if the operational plan needs to change or be more explicit.*

DISCUSSION

3. *3.1 For samples that are to be retained the Operation Plan currently lists 70% ethanol, only as storage medium. It may be worth changing this to 70-100% to make them more suitable for future DNA analysis, if needed.*
3.2 Currently only one means of transport of samples (air mail) is listed in the Operations plan. This method requires splitting samples into smaller containers and is very time consuming. Other methods currently used (road transport or use of propylene glycol) that are more practical should also be listed.
3.3 The diagnostic standards for the determination of NAMP vectors need some clarity (the use of additional verification and notification of the TC needs to be defined).
3.4 Currently the operations plan says insect trap samples need to be returned only twice per year. Discussion should be opened if that should be changed to 'as soon as possible after each trapping event' to avoid deterioration of samples.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. *None*

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

5. *N/A*

NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS

6. Discussion of the following issues:

Attachment A: Changes suggested / Questions to Operations plan

1. Section 3.3, p. 22

- Samples of *Culicoides* are either discarded or are transferred to 70% alcohol in 5 ml plastic tubes with screw caps and these stored in foam tube holders labelled by location and year (if required for testing in the future).

Change to 70-100%

2. Section 3.4 Sample handling and packing, p. 22

- State and Territory Coordinators (or their delegates) should follow the numbered protocol outlined below when submitting samples via courier or Australia Post air mail to an approved (NAMP) laboratory.

Add: These steps are not necessary if samples are sent via Australia Post road transport (attach 'Road Transport Only' sticker to sample) or samples are collected in propylene glycol instead of ethanol.

3. Section 2 pages 33-34:

- Vectors identified within the Transmission Zone (not the Buffer Area), but beyond their known seasonal distribution, are considered non-routine. These detections will require additional verification (which may include consultation with the NAMP Reference Entomologist and the use of additional diagnostics) and subsequent notification of the Technical Committee.
- Vectors identified within the Buffer Area, or south into the Transmission-Free Zone as far as the limit of their known seasonal distribution, are considered routine and require additional verification (which may include consultation with the NAMP Reference Entomologist and the use of additional diagnostics) and subsequent notification of the Technical Committee.
- Vectors identified elsewhere within the Transmission-Free Zone are considered non-routine and require rigorous additional verification. This will include consultation with NAMP Reference Entomologist and the use of additional diagnostics. These detections also require notification of the Technical Committee and may lead to an out-of-session meeting. The outcome of this process may then include additional regional surveillance.

What would be considered as additional verification (e.g. confirmation by another diagnostician in the same lab)?

Notification of the Technical Committee – I guess that would be via email? Do we really do this for every vector specimen caught within the Transmission zone, just beyond their known seasonal distribution (dot point 1) or for vectors in Buffer Area or Transmission Zone within their known seasonal distribution (dot point 2)? Or do we in real life only do it for dot point 3: first occurrence of a vector at a site within the Transmission-Free Zone? And do we do it for all, even when close to Transmission Zone, or only those very significant ones far away from Buffer Zone?

4. Appendix 3.6 p. 48

Please forward the collected samples in two batches, mid-season and as soon as possible after the last trapping date (sufficient bottles, batteries and labels have been supplied).

Change to: as soon as possible after the collecting event to avoid deterioration of the insect specimens.

Delete information in brackets