

FOR INFORMATION

NSDIP Advisory Committee Annual Meeting 2020

Agenda Item 2.1

Last updated: **4 September 2020**

Prepared by K Hepworth & Erin Kelly

NATIONAL SIGNIFICANT DISEASE INVESTIGATION PROGRAM (NSDIP) REPORT FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA 01-07-2019 TO 30-06-2020**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 2019/2020, 142 cases were accepted for a subsidized disease investigation from 29 different veterinary businesses. This was a slight increase on last year. Reportable diseases tested for on a syndromic basis resulted in 68 reportable disease exclusions.

DPIRD conducted no specific group training with private practitioners during 2019/2020 but there was and is strong engagement between field veterinary officers and regional mixed veterinary practices. This is partly due to the department's Covid-19 movement restrictions where some investigations were passed from the agency to practitioners to undertake.

Syndrome Species							
Syndrome	Bovine	Caprine	Equine	Ovine	Porcine	Poultry	Grand Total
Abortions; stillbirths	2	1		3			6
Acute febrile disease	1		1				2
Alimentary signs	3						3
Anaemia	3			1			4
Diarrhoea	9	1		10			20
Found dead	3			10			13
Generalised oedema				2			2
Genital lesions				2			2
Illthrift weight loss	6	1		10			17
Jaundice	2						2
Lameness	2			2			4
Nasal / oral discharge				1			1
Nervous signs	7			15			22
Respiratory signs	1			3		2	6
Salivation or oral lesions	3						3
Skin lesions				3	1		4
Sudden death	7		1	12			20
Weakness / depression	3			6	1		10
Grand Total	53	3	2	80	2	2	142

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Subsidized significant disease investigations carried out by private veterinary practitioners incurred a total cost of ≈ \$229,462. In total, veterinarians were paid \$46,716 to undertake disease investigations and the subsidized laboratory fees for these investigations totaled ≈\$182,746 at an average of ≈ \$1,286 per case for lab fees.

Eleven cases, which use the total of WA's NSDIP budget, were submitted to the NSDIP for funding. This accounted for 8% of WA DPIRD's expenditure for livestock disease investigation by private vets.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

- The Significant Disease Investigation program relies on established relationships between veterinarians, producers, and DPIRD officers to operate effectively. The independent review of WA's SDI program in 2018/19 identified the importance of providing regular feedback to practitioners to reinforce their contribution to the program and provide information on how the data is used. Informal feedback is provided on the quality of samples and other aspects of the case on a regular basis to private veterinarians by DPIRD field veterinary officers and/or Diagnostics and Laboratory Services case managers.

In terms of communication to create awareness of the program, DPIRD markets SDI generally for WA (as opposed to distinguishing our local WA SDI program versus the national SDI program). This is because our WA DPIRD SDI program forms the majority of the program, with the national SDI contributing towards a percentage of our WA SDI program.

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 2020/2021 WA DPIRD plans to conduct 2 to 3 regional seminar/workshops for veterinarians in Perth for peri-urban veterinary practices and other regional locations such as Albany, Bunbury, and Dongara/Geraldton depending on the COVID-19 movement restrictions. These workshops will be funded using WA's funding for SDI activities in WA; with the NSDI funding continued to be used to subsidise livestock disease investigations by private vets.

FEEDBACK

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.				

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.				

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Q4 Animal Health Australia is managing the National Significant Disease Investigation Program effectively/satisfactorily.				
Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
WA agrees that AHA is managing the NSDIP effectively with the funds available.				