

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Foot and Mouth Disease in Cumbria

PLANNING RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

Contingency Planning

1. We recommend that DEFRA undertakes a comprehensive revision of its draft contingency plan in the light of the findings of this and other FMD Inquiries. The plan should be conceived on a multi-agency basis and should engage all the relevant agencies, including the County Councils. In local FMD planning, the Cumbria County Council Emergency Centre should be considered as a 'hub' facility for any future multi-agency response (page 52).

Resources

2. We recommend that DEFRA, in conjunction with partner organisations and veterinary practices throughout Cumbria, reviews personnel requirements (both numbers of personnel and provision of preparatory training) as part of its contingency planning process. Likewise, the local Contingency Plan should specify clearly the stage and scale of epidemic that will trigger a request from DEFRA for assistance from the Army (page 52).

Movement Restrictions

3. We recommend that, in any future outbreak, movement restrictions are introduced as soon as the first case is diagnosed and that provisions are introduced to deal with animals in transit. Additionally, local authorisation of action in dealing with an outbreak should be introduced as early as possible, with DEFRA headquarters kept fully informed of decisions (page 53).

Risk analysis

4. We recommend that DEFRA's risk analysis documents be reviewed from time to time and revised as necessary. A statement of the risk of spread of FMD (or other diseases) through the carriage of particulate matter from pyres should be added. Also, in conjunction with the other agencies with statutory, enforcement or health responsibilities, DEFRA should published a risk analysis of all the carcass disposal options, include computer modelling of the consequences of breakdown in biosecurity in any phase of the elected disposal strategies (page 53).

Outstanding Disputes and Payments

5. We recommend that, as a matter of priority, DEFRA resolves all outstanding disputes and settles all financial accounts relating to the FMD epidemic in Cumbria by 31 March 2003 (page 53).

Epidemiology

6. We recommend that DEFRA commissions an external review of its provision of epidemiological support in connection with FMD, and of the usefulness of the data collected to the understanding of disease spread (page 53).

BIOSECURITY

Import Controls

7. We recommend that the Government publish performance targets and annual performance statistics in respect of import controls in order to promote public confidence in the new measures that have been introduced (page 54).

Livestock Movements

8. We recommend that the current 'standstill' regulations continue to be reviewed to identify practical policies for increased biosecurity that will be more compatible with the needs of commercial farming systems. Through its agencies Government should ensure the provision of training courses for farmers on biosecurity and disease recognition (page 54).

Biosecurity Research

9. We recommend that DEFRA commissions research on biosecurity to provide a robust understanding of the biosecurity measures appropriate to safeguard against FMD spread. The cost benefit of public funding for preventative biosecurity measures in the event of a FMD outbreak should be examined (page 54).

FMD DEFENCE

Developing an Integrated Strategy

10. We recommend that Government establish an independent Working Party to develop an integrated risk-assessed strategy for defence against FMD, covering prevention of disease entry to the Britain, contingency planning, response to disease detection, tactics for disease control and eradication, and post-outbreak recovery (page 56).

Economic, Environmental and Social Impacts

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

Implementation of Legislation

11. We recommend that, as a matter of policy, all changes by Government in disease control legislation requiring implementation by Local Authorities should be supported by appropriate risk-assessment guidance (page 79).

Veterinary Risk Assessment

12. We recommend that there should be closer co-ordination in the veterinary risk advice that is provided nationally by Government and regionally through the SVS Animal Health Offices (page 79).

Period Restriction on Path Closures

13. We recommend that in any future disease outbreak, any general legal declaration covering the closure of footpaths or land by the County Council should be made on a strictly time-limited basis, for example 28 days (page 80).

Responsibility for Path Closures

14. We recommend that the appropriate Local Authority (the County Council where that applies) should hold sole responsibility for closures of Rights of Way, or other pathways, under the Foot and Mouth Order 1983, replacing the present arrangements whereby powers are held both by the Local Authority and DEFRA (page 80).

Enhancing Access

15. We recommend that Cumbria County Council build on the work of the Restriction Review Team to establish regular meetings between responsible bodies and key stakeholders to develop methods and policies to protect and enhance countryside access (page 80).

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Task Forces

16. We recommend that, where appropriate, Cumbria County Council build on the FMD Task Force model and create similar, but smaller, groups to help take forward initiatives related to the County's post-FMD recovery and regeneration (page 80).

Tourism Insurance

17. We recommend that tourism organisations advise the industry of the limitations of existing insurance cover and, together with the NWDA, make representations to the insurance industry for the development of policies that would provide cover in the circumstances that occurred in Cumbria in 2001 (page 80).

Economic and Employment Planning

18. We recommend that there should be a programme of research to provide an improved understanding of the relationship between economic activities and the creation of jobs in the Cumbrian economy (page 81).

State Aid Rules

19. We recommend local and central government campaign for greater flexibility in State Aid Rules to allow specific economic emergencies, such as those that occurred in Cumbria in 2001, to be addressed (page 81).

Regional Economic Monitoring

20. We recommend that the NWDA and Cumbria County Council build on existing initiatives to establish an intensive programme of regional economic monitoring that will provide the detailed up-to-date data necessary to allow business support initiatives to be targeted to the needs for economic regeneration (page 81).

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Environmental Forum

21. We recommend that Cumbria County Council seek to establish a forum in which the public sector agencies covering environment and health would meet on an annual or more frequent basis. This would be designed to create closer links between the different service

providers and to develop an integrated plan for Cumbria covering the areas in which the national and local bodies have responsibilities, including FMD contingency planning (page 81).

Disposal Sites

22. We recommend that the operators of the Distington landfill and of the Watchtree mass burial site build on existing initiatives to ensure that complaints of smell or other environment intrusions on the local community are fully addressed (page 81).

23. We recommend that DEFRA states unequivocally the future plans for the Watchtree site, and particularly whether it is to be permanently closed for disposal of animal carcasses or other waste. Permanent closure would be the plan favoured by the local community and the Inquiry Panel endorses that view (page 82).

Buried Waste

24. We recommend that Cumbria County Council, the Environmental Health Departments, Environment Agency and DEFRA jointly consider what might be done to map where materials are buried on farms and, where necessary, to address any safety issues that may emerge (page 82).

COMMUNITY AND HEALTH IMPACTS

Health Research

25. We recommend to both researchers and funding bodies that there should be further work into the emotional, social and mental health consequences of FMD in Cumbria, and that the research should be extended to encompass children (page 82).

Looking to the Future

RURAL ACTION ZONE (RAZ)

International Exemplar

26. We recommend that the RAZ should be promoted internationally as an exemplar of good practice in rural development (page 93).

Cumbrian Projects and Partnerships

27. We recommend that at the earliest possible stage the Rural Regeneration Company establishes a publicly accessible database of all the projects and partnerships operating in Cumbria, with outline details of the work being undertaken (page 93).

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural Development

28. We recommend that 'participative research' techniques be evaluated as a means of project implementation, and that an 'Agricultural Strategy Committee' is established as an interface between the RAZ organisation and the farming industry (page 93).

Tourism Forum

29. We recommend the formation of a Cumbria Tourism Forum, with an independent Chair from the private sector, to facilitate the different sectors of the industry in co-ordinating funding bids related to the RAZ programme (page 93).

Cumbria Institute

30. We recommend that the concept of a 'Cumbria Institute' be explored with a view to advancing the development of higher education, research and consultancy in Cumbria (page 94).

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Rural Agendas

31. We recommend that within the RAZ programme there should be a Rural Agendas project designed to facilitate community action and leadership on rural issues (page 94).

