

The Executive Committee met on 27 - 28 July. The Report of the Meeting of the Special Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease held in Rome on 21 - 23 September and the summary of the replies to the questionnaire were taken as working documents.

The Executive Committee submitted the following report, which the Commission accepted and decided to adopt as part of its report:

#### Staffing

With regard to the staffing of the Secretariat of the Commission, the Executive Committee unanimously recommended that the Director-General should be asked to appoint Sir Thomas Dalling as Secretary. It was appreciated that it would be difficult for FAO to spare his full-time services for any extended period but, bearing in mind the importance of the work of the Commission and the need for setting it functioning smoothly immediately, it was hoped that this request could be met.

During this time a well qualified veterinarian should be recruited to devote his whole time to assisting Sir Thomas. In due course, if his qualifications prove satisfactory to the Commission, this veterinarian might take over the duties of Secretary. Nominations in this regard were invited from members of the Executive Committee to reach the Director-General of FAO before 15 September 1954.

#### Cooperation with International Bodies.

The Executive Committee fully realises the need for the closest cooperation of the Commission with OIE, OEEC and any other international body with interests in Foot-and-Mouth Disease control. To this end it was decided that there be the closest personal contacts between the Secretariat of the Commission and OIE, and further, that the Secretary would be expected to spend a large proportion of his time in the Office of OIE.

#### Technical Advice

In order that all European countries requiring assistance should have technical advice on Foot-and-Mouth Disease, it is recommended that visits by experts having a special knowledge should be arranged between countries. It is hoped that FAO would give sympathetic consideration to requests for technical assistance. In this connection the work already carried out by FAO in two countries in Europe was noted. It was decided that the Secretariat of the Commission would also be available for this purpose and for any business connected with the work of the Commission.

### Collection of Information

It was decided to implement the proposals of the September Committee in regard to the collection of information. These were as follows:

"The work of collecting comprehensive information would be handled in cooperation with the OIE. In particular, the Committee recommended that a survey be made as soon as possible of the present international reporting system; that direct interchange of information on outbreaks between countries should be encouraged and that information on all outbreaks be sent to the OIE and the Commission, in particular concerning the following points:

The location of the outbreak and type of virus, by telegram;

The extent of the outbreak;

The number and species of animals involved;

The probable source of the infection;

The character of the outbreak with particular reference to its virulence and rate of spread.

"At the same time countries should forward an appreciation of the situation created by the outbreak, with particular reference to the possibility of further spread and the importance of the outbreak. It was considered necessary to develop a system of map reference to indicate the location of outbreaks."

Considerable emphasis was placed on the recommendation of the September Committee concerning the substance of reports which should be sent when outbreaks occur and during their course. It was believed that appreciation of the state of outbreaks might lead to an improvement in preventive measures in adjoining countries.

It was decided that the Secretariat should give guidance to countries in the preparation of such appreciations and reports and ensure, in cooperation with OIE, the rapid dissemination of all relevant information.

### Research Work

The observer from OEEC made reference to the possibility of funds becoming available through the European Productivity Agency for certain projects of a practical nature in support of the Commission's work. The Committee welcomed this suggestion. It confirmed that the list of applied research projects, which had been drawn up by the September Committee, was of very great importance and that the results of such studies would have immediate application in the control of foot-and-mouth disease.

Already a Working Party on Animal Health of OEEC had recommended that three studies of this kind were worthy of immediate support, viz. vaccination with polyvalent vaccines, the relative value of intradermal and subcutaneous injection of vaccines and the duration of immunity induced by vaccines. In view of this possibility and of the interest of OIE, it was agreed that the Secretariat should endeavour to arrange that a small advisory committee be set up jointly between the Commission, OIE and OEEC. This Joint Committee should review the field of research and all the items suggested by the September Committee to which two further items were added: (1) the effect of widespread epizootics on the production of virus for vaccine production and (2) the establishment of precise evidence to evaluate safe methods of disposal of carcasses of animals used for vaccine production. It was considered that there was a possibility that items other than the three already recommended by the OEEC Working Party might require to be given priority, but a review of all the work presently being undertaken at various research institutions would help the Joint Committee to formulate its advice.

It was possible also that funds might become available from various sources other than OEEC.

#### Standardization of Products used in Diagnosis and Control

The Committee was informed that there is in being a Committee of OIE which is studying the broad field of standardization of biological products. At a recent meeting of this Committee it was decided that consideration should now be given to the question of the standardization of sera used in the typing of strains of foot-and-mouth disease virus. It was decided that the Secretariat should cooperate with this Committee.

The Executive Committee also realized the need for the availability of strains of virus of known antigenic quality for vaccine production.

An arrangement should be made for an institute to maintain such stocks of virus and to prepare and hold stocks of standard anti-sera for distribution to other institutions. It should be understood, however, that only strains of types A, O and C will be distributed. It was agreed that the Virus Research Station, Pirbright, England, would be a suitable institution for these purposes and the Director-General of FAO is requested to communicate with the Government of the United Kingdom with a view to ascertaining if arrangements can be made for this purpose.

In addition to standardization, the Committee lays considerable stress on the need for standard techniques and methods of interpretation of the tests applied in the typing of viruses. To this end the Executive Committee endorsed fully the recommendation

of the September Committee concerning the holding of seminars and it was decided that the Secretariat cooperate with OEEC and OIE on this subject.

#### Register of Stocks

It was explained that in view of the differing dates when the replies to the questionnaire were made, it would not be practicable to establish a register of stocks of vaccine and virus on the basis of these replies. It was decided that the Secretariat of the Commission should establish as soon as possible and maintain such a register.

#### Questionnaire

With regard to the questionnaire, replies were received from 16 countries. A great deal of valuable information has been provided which will require detailed examination in order fully to appreciate the position of foot-and-mouth disease in individual countries. It was decided that the Secretariat should further consider the replies and use the questionnaire as a basis for further discussions in the various countries.

#### Typing of Virus

The Committee supported the recommendation of the September Committee on the importance of routine typing of virus. It recommends that virus should be typed regularly in the course of an epizootic and particularly emphasised that virus should be typed from initial outbreaks (outbreaks having no obvious connection with any of the outbreaks in the country); from outbreaks where vaccine has apparently failed to protect and where pigs only are apparently affected.

#### Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Countries outside Europe

It was decided that the Commission should obtain information as soon as possible through FAO, the OIE and other organisations on the incidence and control measures for foot-and-mouth disease in countries outside Europe so that adequate precautions may be taken to prevent the introduction of the disease. The Commission realized the serious situation which might arise from the introduction of any type of virus and considered that the Commission should, at a very early date, recommend precautionary measures and foster the adoption of drastic eradication measures if such an exotic type of virus is introduced into Europe.

#### International Trade in Meat

Attention was drawn to the importance of the international trade in meat in connection with disease control and it was decided that the Secretariat should collaborate with OIE in the collection of information and in the study of this subject.