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RESOLUTION NUMBER: 6 and 11 Combined   APPROVED

SOURCE: **USAHA/AAVLD JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK**
USAHA/AAVLD JOINT COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL HEALTHSURVEILLANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

SUBJECT MATTER: STATE ANIMAL LABORATORY MESSAGING SERVICE
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The speed of commerce now demands that information move as expeditiously and efficiently as possible from point A to point B to meet client expectations and demands. The veterinary diagnostic laboratory community in the United States has been struggling to accomplish such information transfer for years. Many parts of the necessary infrastructure to support these transfers exist (Laboratory Information Management Systems [LIMS], messaging software, messaging standards, State and Federal databases, etc.), but there is currently no overall linkage between these parts.

The development of a State Animal Laboratory Messaging Service (SALMS) is meant to complete the linkages and therefore provide an end-to-end infrastructure for the electronic transfer of information. The "missing link" at this point is a central message routing site. SALMS is intended to address this and bridge the gap between what are now isolated systems.

The SALMS will:
- provide a routing/messaging service for any/all State or Federal veterinary diagnostic laboratories.
- be a controlled, secure pathway. Registration and approval will be required to participate, but will be less complicated than government requirements.
- create a communication path for both order and result messages between any two or more participants, for any testing service.
- improve the efficiency and accuracy of information transfer between participants.
- utilize industry standards for messaging which will require messages in a standardized, published extensible markup language (XML) format. This may not be strictly a Health Level Seven (HL7) standard but will follow best practices of the informatics standards development community and use existing standards wherever appropriate
- require a participant to have the capability to create and receive the standard XML message. How each participant handles the data that goes into or comes out of a message is up to them locally. SALMS participants will provide technical support, if needed, to other labs.

- be built using open-source, industry vetted and accepted, free components.
- be independent of source mechanisms for generating or receiving messages, i.e. no specific software or mechanism is mandated for a lab to participate.
- be hosted (server and software) and administered by Cornell University, inside its secure firewall on redundant, secure systems with 24/7 availability.
- be free to qualified participants.

SALMS will not:
- be a data repository. Messages and the data they contain are passed through the routing service and are not retained longer than necessary to facilitate secure transfer.
- necessarily replace the National Animal Health Laboratory Network Information Technology system, although it could serve the routing needs for these messages.

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association and the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians support the development, testing and assessment of the State Animal Laboratory Messaging Service and request that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) fully engage and cooperate with this development, testing and assessment, and enabling interoperability with USDA-APHIS-VS information systems including the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, Emergency Management Response System, Surveillance Collaboration Services, and the USDA-APHIS-VS National Veterinary Services Laboratory.

RESPONSE:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Veterinary Services (VS) recognizes the concerns of the United States Animal Health Association and appreciates the opportunity to respond. The VS Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) staff have engaged with the State Animal Laboratory Messaging Services' (SALMS) development team in multiple discussions. These include technical integration, specific testing plans and schedules, and parallel deployment of both SALMS and VS' Laboratory Messaging Services (LMS) set for March 2013. The LMS team is also leading discussions with National Veterinary Services Laboratories, Emergency Management Response System, and Surveillance Collaborative Services teams, as Phase 2 of the LMS project, which is integration of LMS and these other VS systems, initiates. Additionally, a larger working group has been proposed and widely supported by the NAHLN IT Committee. The working group will be comprised of representatives from SALMS and each of the VS systems and have an estimated start date of February 2013. Top priority discussions for the group will be to determine if and exactly where integration points for these other VS systems are needed (beyond the connection between LMS and SALMS) and what will be needed by each system and its users to accomplish this.