REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION
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Vice Chair: Kevin D. Maher, IA

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The Committee met on November 17, 2010 at the Minneapolis Hilton Hotel in Minneapolis, Minn., at 8:00 am. There were 47 members and 59 guests present. Dr. Forshey opened the meeting. Kevin Maher reviewed resolution process.

Presentations:

Current IT Strategy within APHIS related to animal ID and Traceability
John Picanso APHIS-VS

Mr. Picanso reviewed overall IT strategy. A summary is attached at the end of this report, including the following key topics:
- VS 2015 and the 2009 VS IT Roadmap
- Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) Acquisition
- Mobile Information Management System (MIMS)
- Data Acquisition
- VS IT Investment Portfolio
- LIMS, EMRS, NAHLN, VSPS
- Training

USDA-APHIS-VS remarks on current Animal Disease Traceability Strategy -
Neil Hammerschmidt, APHIS-VS

Mr. Hammerschmidt provided an overview of the comments that APHIS received from the public meetings and Denver traceability forum and input from the traceability regulations working group. APHIS has adjusted the planned content of the traceability proposed rule which is summarized in the document he reviewed, titled: “Appendix A. Animal Disease Traceability Framework. Details on the Preliminary Content of the Proposed Rule.” A summary of Mr. Hammerschmidt’s report is attached, titled: USAHA Livestock Identification Committee Traceability Report – Hammerschmidt.’

Open Discussion:
Nancy Robinson, Cattle ID Group Coordinator provided comments that summarize “Cattle ID Group Concerns Respective to Latest Draft of the Animal Disease Traceability Framework Preliminary Content of the Proposed Rule.” A memo summary of her remarks are attached to this report labeled ‘Cattle ID Group.’

Bret Marsh: Commended APHIS and working groups of all the work from Feb. 2010 to this mtg. that has been done on the ID.

Keith Rohr: Commented Animal Traceability Rule process has allowed states to speak during the process, but thinks earlier input from states and industry may be preferred. Different measures of performance may exist due to disease and process of animal movement, suggests industry knowledge of issues that were discussed in TB committee. Begin process driven by import requirements among individual state requirements, then other states may catch up.

Standard for ID requirements for state import was discussed by Dr. Hunt, Dr. Rohr and others.

Committee Business Session

Consideration of the Committee Purpose: This was reviewed and no changes were recommended regarding the mission or purpose of the committee.

Resolutions – one resolution was presented and passed unanimously regarding Sheep and Goat Identification.

Other Business

Dr. Bill Hartmann moved “To form subcommittee for disease traceability board consisting of NIAA, NPB, and NIAA. The concept involved creation of a control board for animal disease traceability, as that may be a way for that to occur, patterned after PRV control board, such as: NIAA, NPB, and NIAA. They could determine tiers for states, to meet the standard, and would serve as a subcommittee to the Committee. Motion passed unanimously.
Veterinary Services Information Technology Software Development Review
John Picanso
Chief Information Officer
Veterinary Services

Overview
VS 2015 and the 2009 VS IT Roadmap
Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) Acquisition
Mobile Information Management System (MIMS)
Data Acquisition
VS IT Investment Portfolio
LIMS, EMRS, NAHLN, VSPS
Training

VS 2015
Vision/Mission- How does IT support the VS 2015 Vision
Strategic Goals
We will transform our organizational culture to meet the evolving needs of the animal health community.
We will work to build new collaborations and partnerships while valuing and sustaining existing ones.
As the established animal health authority, VS will optimize and leverage our unique competencies in animal health to meet the demands of the 21st century.
We will support the readiness and response capabilities of our staff while balancing the needs of animal agriculture with the interests of people and the environment.
We will invest in an integrated technical infrastructure to support our mission.

VS 2015
The purpose of the Veterinary Services IT Roadmap is to:
Provide a variety of executives, industry partners, state-cooperators, field personnel, and IT personnel the ability to quickly ascertain the current technical posture of the Veterinary Services.
Provide a technical framework of a future architecture.
Define processes and methods that describe how a variety of organizations and information technology resources can either obtain or deliver mission critical electronic data or information to Veterinary Services information systems (both current and planned).
Describe technology alternatives in moving information and technical systems from a current state to a planned future state.
To directly support the Vision and Mission of VS 2015

COTS Evaluation
“...Comprehensive Animal Health Surveillance Management, is for the acquisition, implementation and support of a commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software product for comprehensive and integrated animal health management surveillance.”

Target date of September 30, 2010

Status:
Technical proposals have been reviewed and initial evaluation was completed
A formal, pre-award protest filed was filed with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) – subsequently dismissed
Complete the evaluation
Goal is to award a contract in the next 90 days

Investment Consolidation
Consolidation
A consistent data acquisition and exchange approach
Service Oriented Architecture
Utilize COTS for data streams when possible
A consistent data presentation approach
Data warehouse
Business Intelligence tools
Security posture improvement
National Information Technology Center (NITC)
Minimize overhead
Certification and Accreditation (C&A)
Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC)
Custom application development

Animal Health Enterprise Reporting Strategy and Services Using Enterprise Messaging Solutions

MIM – PDA
Distributed and used in at least 26 states (up from 14 last year)
- Program disease surveillance/investigations, task forces
  TB, Brucellosis, sightings, depopulations, and exports
Accredited Veterinarians (MI, MT, NM …)
Using MIM, performed “Activities” on total of 653,000 + animals (up from 332,000)
MIM data capture by program

Data Acquisition

2009

- Transcription: 86%
- VS: 10%
- Others: 4%

2010

- Transcription: 72%
- VS MIM: 10%
- Comm slaughter: 18%
Data Acquisition and Exchange

Roadmap Initiative 1 – Objective 2

Enterprise Messaging Solutions
Selected Oracle SOA Suite, which features
Enterprise Service Bus
Business Process Monitoring
Licensing for High Availability
Completed SOA contract for:
Installation/configuration of the suite
Technical support and development training
Enhanced security model
VS Surveillance Message implementation with ability to securely accept surveillance messages and store them in the Message Data Park
Started project with Indiana BOAH to exchange Scrapie data using new SOA infrastructure.

VS IT Investments

National Veterinary Services Laboratories Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)
Background
Modules developed around the diagnostic testing laboratory functions
Incorporates Ames, IA and Plum Island, NY onto one system
Populates AVIC Test Result database
Configurable COTS application
Access is restricted to authorized NVSL users only
 Planned 2011 Actions
Laboratory Testing Enhancements
Complete instrument interface
Incorporate Windows authentication
Utilize Northwest Analyst
Reagent Ordering
Messaging
Incorporate messaging with NAHLN, VSLS, ASHM, etc.
Certification & Accreditation
Compete Phase II

Emergency Management Response System (EMRS)

EMRS Usage in the Last 12 Months

Utilized in 15 Incidents

Utilized for 1,674 Investigations

EMRS Future Projects
System Replacement
Lotus Notes platform decommissioned
COTS and GOTS being reviewed for a possibly acquisition strategy (on-going)
Should a suitable COTS or GOTS not be found, internal resources are reviewing the possibilities of recreating the application

APHIS/FAZD Center Project: Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for Emergency Responders

Description:
An integrated multi-purpose system for emergency managers for use during an animal disease outbreak
Uses integrative display systems and visual analytics methodologies
Collaboration between USDA APHIS’ Veterinary Services (VS) and Emergency Programs, and the FAZD Center
Will contribute to planning for USDA APHIS’ National Center for Animal Health and Emergency Management and VS, as well as state and local decision makers
APHIS/FAZD Center Project: Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for Emergency Responders

**Key Features:**
- Supports overall emergency response cycle, including planning, training, and operational and analytical functionality
- Manages a large amount of data and real-time communication channels
- Coordinates collaborative responses among agencies and decision makers
- Enables operating picture for incident commanders at varying levels of scale; begin with national, then state and local
- Displays complex information from multiple related data sets

**NAHNLN Projects/Releases**
- Classical Swine Fever enhancements updated to accept ELISA assay results
  - 3,963 results messaged
- 3 new lab messaging interfaces
- Avian Influenza enhancements
  - Improved messaging error handling
  - 10,838 results messaged
- 2 new lab messaging interfaces
- Swine Influenza Virus enhancements
  - requirements & system design completed

**NAHNLN Future Priorities**
- CWD Result Messaging with routing to VSLS
- SIV Result Messaging
- Scrapie Result Messaging with routing to VSLS
- FMD Result Messaging with new GUI features to support accessing result reports from NAHLN IT application
- WS AI Order Messaging with routing from VSLS and with direct or indirect routing from MIM devices possibly supporting full order messaging suite (e.g. order status notice)

**2010 Releases**
- National Veterinarian Accreditation Program (NVAP) - *January 2010*
  - New module built to satisfy data capture needs based on a new rule that went into effect January 2010
- Live Animal Import (LAI) – *May 2010*
  - New module built in response to an OIG audit deficiencies
- Animal Import Center Reservation (AICR) – *October 2010*
  - New module to standardize and streamline port barn reservation system in New York and Miami
VSPS Trends and Usage

Animal typos on CVI in the last 12 months
- porcine: 1,811,998
- bovine: 140,343
- equine: 3,783
- ovine: 1,810
- caprine: 322

CVI State Summary

CVI Origin States (35)

CVI Destination States (47)

USDA-APHIS-VS
VSPS Future Projects
Enhanced Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) capture capabilities
Current development will provide the capabilities to enter and track paper CVIs created outside of VSPS. Completion date is January 2011.

VS CIO Training

<table>
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<th>Classroom training</th>
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<th>ERMS</th>
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In response to feedback, including comments from the public meetings and Denver traceability forum, the traceability regulations working group and APHIS adjusted the planned content of the traceability proposed rule. These revisions include establishing a three-step plan to phase-in the proposed identification requirement for beef young stock and feeder cattle moving interstate, including an assessment of how the system works for adult breeding animals to help us determine when to require official identification of beef young stock and feeder cattle. The revisions also include maintaining the use of 840 animal identification number tags for U.S.-born animals and allowing backtags for “direct to slaughter” animals.

Further, APHIS is revising its policy on the distribution of National Uniform Eartagging System (NUES) tags. We are changing the Veterinary Services memorandum that restricts the use of these tags to accredited veterinarians and State and Federal animal health officials. Under the revised memorandum, States may elect to distribute NUES tags directly to producers.

To ensure uniformity of official identification and help clarify whether an animal is officially identified, APHIS is developing standards and basic criteria for official identification eartags. For individual animals, official identification eartags will be imprinted with the U.S. shield and a nationally unique official animal identification number. Historically, the prefix for NUES tags for cattle has been the State numeric code. In the future, States may elect to obtain NUES tags with their State postal abbreviation. APHIS will approve other metal tags that States and Tribes may use if they wish to obtain NUES tags directly from the manufacturers. States can continue to obtain NUES tags with a State numeric prefix from the warehouse maintained by APHIS.

States and Tribes may elect to use the premises identification number (PIN) in their traceability system. The standardized PIN obtained through the PIN allocator will maintain the seven-alphanumeric character format. The last character is a check digit—check sum based on ISO 7064. Using the State’s postal abbreviation as the first two of the seven characters (for example, OH341T4) will be an option available in April 2011.

States and Tribes can also elect to use State-issued location identifiers or LIDs. The standards for LIDs were discussed earlier this year with State animal identification administrators and coordinators. The LID will start with the State’s postal abbreviation and include options for check digits.

APHIS will continue its collaborative and transparent efforts in developing the animal disease traceability framework. Additionally, APHIS will continue to offer States and Tribes options for animal identification and information systems to use in their traceability programs.
Memo to USDA-APHIS-VS Regarding Cattle ID Group Concerns Respective to Latest Draft of the Animal Disease Traceability Framework Preliminary Content of the Proposed Rule

Presented by Nancy Robinson
Livestock Marketing Association and Cattle ID Group Coordinator

Editor’s note: The following memo was sent October 6, 2010, attention to Dr. John Clifford and Mr. Neil Hammerschmidt, and is included in its entirety.

The cattle industry organizations and individuals involved in the Cattle ID Group (CIDG) appreciate APHIS’ continued efforts to reach out to the cattle industry, through the CIDG, seeking our views, recommendations and concerns in the development of a proposed rule implementing USDA’s Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) Framework. The CIDG’s goal, throughout this process, has been to work with USDA and state animal health officials to reach a consensus on an ADT framework that is realistic in its goals, workable to the greatest extent possible, cost-effective at all levels of the program and can be successfully implemented by all concerned.

The CIDG met, via teleconference, on September 29 to discuss the Traceability Regulation Working Group’s (TRWG) latest rendition of the proposed ADT rule’s content. We also discussed unresolved issues from the Joint NIAA/USAHA ADT Forum held in Denver August 30-31. Our discussion resulted in a number of issues and questions that we believe need further review and resolution by the TRWG before a proposed rule is written and published implementing the ADT Framework. Those issues are:

1. The latest TRWG document indicates that, “The official identification number would be required on the ICVI [interstate certificate of veterinary inspection], unless: …The cattle or bison are (1) sexually intact and under 18 months of age or (2) steers or spayed heifers…”

We were led to believe at the Denver ADT Forum that each individual identification number would not be required on the ICVI. If this requirement were to stand, it would be a very serious choke point in the speed of commerce for the cattle industry. Requiring veterinarians to record every ID number on the ICVI would be extremely burdensome, time consuming and likely fraught with errors in transcribing the tag numbers to the ICVI. We question why such a requirement is even necessary in a bookend approach where recording animal movements is not an issue. If the purpose of this requirement is to assure the identification of the animals, perhaps a visual inspection of the animals for the absence of an ID would suffice.

Given the significant impact of this ICVI requirement, particularly as other classes of cattle enter the program, we ask that TRWG further discuss this issue and seek additional input from the CIDG and others before making a final decision in this matter.

2. The CIDG remains greatly concerned that too little attention has been given to the collection of official identification at slaughter. Comments at the Denver Forum would indicate that this critical nexus in a bookend traceability system has received relatively little consideration from the packing industry, USDA’s Food Safety Inspection Service or APHIS. As far as we can tell, there has been little discussion to date of such issues as the collection of brands at slaughter, which are not collected now; how the slaughter process will accommodate the recovery of many hundreds of thousand ID devices; the cost associated with the recovery of those IDs; etc.

To have so little discussion and so few answers to implementation of this critical control point in the ADT system is very concerning to the CIDG, as it should be to you. Thus we urge the TRWG and APHIS carefully consider our concerns in this regard and take immediate steps to initiate discussions with the affected industry and FSIS and let us know of your progress in addressing this issue.

We understand that APHIS intends to later establish and publish a separate traceability performance standards document that would define the process for evaluating the progress of states and tribes in achieving traceability. When APHIS commences discussions on this aspect of the performance standards, we would appreciate the Agency engaging the CIDG and/or our individual organizations in the discussion of what would constitute conformance by the states with the ADT performance standards.

We are particularly concerned with the current thinking respective to Traceability Tier III in which states or tribes not meeting Tier I or II could be subject to additional interstate movement requirements. Depending on what those requirements are and the reasons for the state’s non-compliance, such as lack of necessary funding, personnel, etc.; we foresee these additional requirements being a greater penalty on a state’s livestock industry than on the state itself.
The establishment of an electronic ICVI is critical to the implementation of the ADT program. The failure of any state to have the necessary electronic ICVI systems in place upon implementation of Step I of the program is unacceptable. Thus the CIDG would appreciate a periodic update on how APHIS and the states are or intend to achieve this important ADT implementation benchmark.

It is stated on page seven of Appendix A of the ADT Framework document, Step II—Assessment that, “Additionally, studies and surveys will be conducted at critical infrastructure points, including markets of various sizes, to evaluate the implementation of the regulatory requirements of Step I…” Please provide us as much information as possible on what you consider to be the “critical infrastructure points”, what other specific studies or surveys you would anticipate in evaluating the system, other than of course the examples given in the previous paragraph of percentage of animals officially identified and percentage of identifications collected at slaughter.

We further note in the current draft of the TRWG document that only the state animal health official or an Area Veterinarian in Charge can authorize the replacement of an official identification. This is extremely restrictive and will likely encourage abuse of the system particularly if we are to avoid any slowing of commerce of animals requiring a replacement tag.

Lastly, the CIDG is continuing to discuss the Step II assessment process and what we believe would be the most quantifiable, repeatable, measurable program performance indicators for assessing the progress and successful implementation of Step I, prior to moving to Step III of the ADT program. The importance of this issue to the cattle industry and ultimately to the successful implementation of the ADT program cannot be understated. Thus, while we will make every effort to complete our work on this issue with all due diligence and speed, it is more important for us all as well as the ultimate viability and success of the ADT program that we get it right, than to get it done based on some arbitrary timeline.

We look forward to continuing our work with the APHIS leadership and indirectly the TRWG on this most important issue. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance in the coming weeks as development of the content of the proposed ADT rule continues.

List of Participating Organizations in the Cattle ID Group:
American Angus Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
Dairy Farmers of America
Livestock Marketing Association
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
National Livestock Producers Association
National Farmers Union
R-CALF USA
Red Angus Association of America
Southeastern Livestock Network, LLC
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association
U.S. Cattlemen’s Association