

Ovine Johne's disease (OJD) Regional Biosecurity Plan Audit - Queensland

Objective:

To report on conformance with mutually-agreed standards of OJD risk management as a Regional Biosecurity Area (RBA) for OJD by Queensland.

Regional Biosecurity Plans have documented the agreed actions of the farmers/producers/growers in a geographic region to achieve and maintain protection against spread of OJD into and within their RBA. They outline measures like conditions on sheep movements into the area and response to disease detection.

Standard 1	There are established and documented arrangements between key RBA stakeholders (such as formal regional industry-government partnership) to provide the framework necessary for industry to successfully manage the regional biosecurity plan.
Guidelines	<p>A formal regional biosecurity group (ideally with input from industry and government) is established. Regional biosecurity groups will be an aggregation of producers from a defined geographical region who are committed to working together to prevent introduction and spread of OJD (and potentially other conditions).</p> <p>A group name and a coordinator or chairperson should be nominated. A set of clear business/operating rules for the group which aims to reduce the risk of personal conflict within the group (review these at least annually) should be developed.</p> <p>An RBP is written and agreed, and which specifies responsibilities for each member of the group and identifies the activities required to implement and maintain an RBP.</p> <p>The RBP should outline clear strategies for preventing the entry of OJD into the RBA and for responding to suspected or confirmed OJD infection, including processes for identifying, notifying and managing potential spread for high risk neighbours and traces.</p>

	A copy of the RBP (and business rules) should be distributed to all flock-owners within the group.
RBP provision(s)	Queensland has continued a regulatory approach to OJD control and management as described throughout the RBP.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	This approach is regularly reviewed by the Queensland government with endorsement from AgForce's Sheep and Wool Board.
Standard 2	Commitment from producers and other industry stakeholders (eg, agents, saleyards) within the RBA to protect the disease status of the region is demonstrated.
Guidelines	<p>There should be evidence of ongoing support from producers within RBA that they are committed to protecting and maintaining the OJD status of the region.</p> <p>All producers in the RBA should have received a copy of the RBP, and understand their contributions to the plan, including conformance with the provisions of the plan.</p> <p>Results of polling of producers or other forms of feedback, and audits of conformance with conditions in the plan may provide evidence of support.</p>
RBP provision(s)	Queensland legislation and DAFF policy provide for minimum stock entry requirements and mandatory disease control activities that are consistent with the RBP.
Actions and outcomes to comply with	<p>Audits of Certificates of Health for entry of sheep into Queensland and checking of sheep at saleyards have not detected any non-compliance with entry requirements.</p> <p>There has not been a single case of detection on non-compliance with sheep entry requirements during the</p>

standard	<p>reporting period.</p> <p>There appears to be a very high level of compliance with entry requirements.</p> <p>There was no known OJD in Queensland during the reporting period.</p>
Standard	<p>Members of the RBP have a property biosecurity plan in place.</p>
Guidelines	<p>Property biosecurity plans are implemented by all members of the regional biosecurity group to under-pin the RBPs.</p> <p>The <i>National Farm Biosecurity Reference Manual for Grazing Livestock Production</i> is available at www.farmbiosecurity.com.au . It is the reference document for use in developing a property livestock biosecurity plan.</p> <p>Each production system has a different range of biosecurity threats, challenges and operating environments, which must be addressed with relevant approaches based on the principles identified in the manual.</p> <p>Example responsibilities of each producer may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement a property biosecurity plan ▪ Comply with the RBP specifications, especially for introduction of livestock ▪ Maintain records (NLIS, NVD and Sheep Health Statements) of any stock movements ▪ Meet the annual audit requirements ▪ Regularly monitor their sheep for signs of disease, investigate ill-health and report notifiable diseases

	In the case of suspected or confirmed OJD, develop a Property Disease Management Plan with animal health staff and carry out management practices under the Plan, covering costs as necessary.
RBP provision(s)	All entries of sheep and goats to Queensland are required by legislation to comply with the RBP entry standards. A regulatory response will prevent spread from all suspected or confirmed infection.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	Demonstrably high compliance with entry requirements, through regular audits of Certificates of Health as required by legislation. There is no known OJD in Queensland. As a result, biosecurity planning to manage risk of spread within Queensland currently is not a high priority for government or industry, and individual property biosecurity plans for OJD appear to be rare.
Standard	Surveillance is undertaken to provide confidence in disease prevalence and for early disease detection.
Guidelines	Surveillance is undertaken by all members of the group to maintain the regional status and to ensure early detection. The group, in consultation with their technical adviser(s), determines appropriate surveillance and monitoring strategies, including methods, frequency and reporting/documentation requirements. Surveillance and monitoring may be by on-farm screening and/or by use of abattoir monitoring. Strategic use of abattoir monitoring may be enhanced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determining the target regional prevalence that the group wishes to maintain ▪ Determining the percentage of flocks that should be monitored through abattoir monitoring or on-farm testing

	<p>within a 2-year period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Testing sufficient lines of sheep via abattoir monitoring or on-farm flock testing to be able to calculate the regional disease prevalence estimates ▪ Accessing abattoir surveillance monitoring reports ▪ Estimating and reporting prevalence for the group based on objective data. <p>Positive detections of disease are dealt with as agreed in the plan</p> <p>Cases of unexplained ill-thrift, wasting and death in adult sheep should be investigated to rule out OJD.</p>
RBP provision(s)	Abattoir monitoring and tracing of all known or suspected infection.

<p>Actions and outcomes to comply with standard</p>	<p>Abattoir monitoring through the NSHMP continues to report nil detections of infection in Queensland sheep. There has never been a detection of Queensland OJD through abattoir monitoring.</p> <p>All known or suspected infection in Qld is traced as a matter of policy.</p> <p>Summary of Queensland lines inspected and infected with OJD nationally:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 496 1599 927"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number of animals inspected</th> <th>Number of lines inspected</th> <th>Number of lines infected</th> <th>Percentage of lines infected</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1/7/13 - 30/6/14 (12 months)</td> <td>115,908</td> <td>296</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1/7/14 - 30/6/15 (12 months)</td> <td>117,894</td> <td>216</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Number of animals inspected	Number of lines inspected	Number of lines infected	Percentage of lines infected	1/7/13 - 30/6/14 (12 months)	115,908	296	0	0	1/7/14 - 30/6/15 (12 months)	117,894	216	0	0
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<p>Standard</p>	<p>Sheep entering the RBA meet the agreed minimum standards of assurance against OJD risk.</p>															
<p>Guidelines</p>	<p>All sheep movements into the RBA should be accompanied by a National Vendor Declaration (NVD) and a Sheep Health Statement (SHS).</p> <p>All SHSs for sheep entering the RBA should show that the entries conform to the agreed minimum standards of assurance against OJD.</p> <p>The agreed minimum standards of assurance against OJD risk for sheep entering the RBA are:</p>															

- Adult sheep and lambs from:
 - Another OJD RBA (other than from infected or suspect flocks);
 - SheepMAP flocks;
 - Flocks that have had a negative PFC 350 or Abattoir 500 test within the preceding two years and the flock is a closed flock (no introduced sheep, including rams);
 - Flocks that have had a negative PFC 350 or Abattoir 500 test within the last two years and all sheep introduced¹ within the preceding 5 years were from:
 - Flocks located in the OJD Protected Area; OR
 - SheepMAP flocks OR
 - (prior to 11 January 2013) flocks that met the requirements for moving into SA (except KI) and NSW Exclusion Areas (i.e. ABC Score 4 or higher under the superseded ABC scheme), OR
 - (after January 2013) flocks that had a negative test
 - An OJD RBA flock, and have attended a show or breeding centre at which they have been housed, fed and watered separately from all other stock, and are returning direct to a RBA within 14 days.
 - Other than a RBA to attend a show or breeding centre at which they will be housed, fed and watered separately from all other stock, and will be returning directly out of the RBA within 14 days.
- Terminal T-tag lambs (A)
 - Terminal lambs identified with an approved NLIS T Tag may be moved/traded into any flock. Terminal

	<p>lambs must be slaughtered before cutting adult teeth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where terminal lambs have been introduced to a flock and are removed before cutting any adult teeth the flock's status remains unchanged. <p>Conformance with the entry standards is monitored.</p> <p>High-risk entries are identified, and owners notified of agreed standards, potential consequences, and options to mitigate risk of establishment of OJD.</p>
RBP provision(s)	<p>The current regulated entry requirements for sheep (and goats) into Queensland are consistent with the agreed RBP standards and SDR&Gs for BJD.</p> <p>Entry of sheep into Queensland must be accompanied by a Certificate of Health which shows compliance with these standards. A copy of the Certificate of Health must be provided to the receiver of the sheep in Queensland, and a copy must be provided to DAFF.</p>
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	<p>DAFF undertakes audits of Certificates of Health to monitor compliance. Depending on current workload, normally 100% of sheep certificates are checked, but on rare occasions the rate of audits may be 25%. There have been no detections of non-conformance in the past 12 months.</p>
Standard	<p>Technical assistance is provided to suspect and infected flocks</p>
Guidelines	<p>Technical assistance is available and is provided to suspect and infected flocks.</p> <p>Owners of suspect or infected flocks are referred to one or more veterinary adviser(s) (either government or MAP-approved private practitioners) who are familiar with the group's RBP and the epidemiology of the</p>

	<p>disease(s) being covered.</p> <p>Examples of the roles of the technical advisors could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the RBP aims, objectives and specifications ▪ Comply with the relevant Acts and Regulations ▪ Provide advice to help producers develop their understanding of OJD, risks involved, management and control ▪ Assist with the development of a Property Disease Management Plan ▪ Assist with the investigation and testing of suspect and infected flocks and individual sheep such as high-risk introductions ▪ Assist with the implementation of agreed surveillance and monitoring activities ▪ Conduct risk assessments with individual producers ▪ Assist to identify and notify tracing backward and forward of animal movements and high-risk neighbours if required. This is most efficiently be done by tracing movements through the NLIS database, some of which (property identification) is a government role. ▪ Report to the group as required.
RBP provision(s)	<p>Biosecurity Queensland maintains policy, field and laboratory staff which is skilled in animal disease management and is well experienced in Johne's disease management through the recent Qld2012, Qld2013 and other BJD incidents. These capabilities are readily transferable to OJD for regulatory control in the event of</p>

	an incident.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	There have been no detections of OJD.
Standard	Suspect cases are investigated.
Guidelines	Any suspect case is investigated by the nominated technical advisor in accordance with the SDRGs.
RBP provision(s)	As above, Queensland has policies, powers and capabilities to investigate all cases of suspected or confirmed OJD.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	There has been no relevant cases requiring investigation for OJD.
Standard	Effective control/eradication programs are implemented on infected properties
Guidelines	<p>In consultation with the nominated technical advisor, owners of all infected or suspect flocks develop and implement a Property Disease Management Plan. The plan should consider identification of high- and low-risk mobs, testing and/or culling, vaccination, flock and pasture management, and destocking to minimise within-flock spread, reduction of clinical impacts, progression towards eradication, and prevention of spread to neighbours and trading partners.</p> <p>A risk assessment of shared facilities, waterways and flood zones is carried out.</p>

	<p>Immediate neighbours of the infected property should be notified of the confirmed infection and encouraged to check boundary fences and review straying history.</p> <p>The response to detected infection should also include identification and notification to traceforward and high-risk traceback properties to enable those owners to manage OJD risk with new information.</p> <p>All individual producers of the RBA should ensure that their biosecurity procedures are reviewed and implemented.</p>
RBP provision(s)	As above, Queensland has policies, powers and capabilities to support effective control and eradication for all cases of suspected or confirmed OJD.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	There have been no detections of OJD.
Standard	High-risk neighbouring flocks are investigated.
Guidelines	<p>High risk neighbouring flocks are investigated by the nominated technical advisor.</p> <p>The objectives of these investigations are to determine whether the infection has spread and to minimise the potential for further spread. Depending on the level of risk, management and monitoring procedures may be put in place to minimise risk of infection and to facilitate early detection.</p> <p>A risk assessment of shared facilities, waterways and flood zones is carried out.</p> <p>Boundary fences are checked and maintained to keep them in a condition that prevents neighbouring sheep straying between properties.</p>

	Strategies such as ring vaccination may be considered.
RBP provision(s)	As above, Queensland has policies, powers and capabilities to trace and control all cases of suspected or confirmed OJD.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	No applicable cases.
Standard	Tracing of high-risk traceforward and traceback movements is conducted.
Guidelines	<p>High risk movements backward and forward are traced to determine whether the infection has spread and minimise the potential for spread.</p> <p>The objectives of these investigations are to determine whether the infection has spread and to minimise the potential for further spread. Depending on the level of risk, management and monitoring procedures may be put in place to minimise risk of infection and to facilitate early detection.</p> <p>Owners of infected flocks should identify and notify owners of flocks to which they have sold at-risk animals or from which they have introduced high-risk animals.</p> <p>Owners and advisors may need to seek government assistance in using NLIS to identify movement details.</p>
RBP provision(s)	As above, Queensland has policies, powers and capabilities to trace and control all cases of suspected or confirmed OJD.
Actions and outcomes to	No applicable cases.

comply with standard	
Standard	A Sheep Health Statement is obtained for all sheep movements into the RBA.
Guidelines	<p>A SHS is used for all movements of sheep, purchased or on agistment, into the area.</p> <p>A SHS is also encouraged for all movements of sheep, purchased or on agistment, within the area.</p> <p>Only sheep that come with a signed SHS which meet the minimum entry standards should be introduced into the RBP. Introductions of stock which are higher than the minimum entry requirements are encouraged.</p> <p>A SHS should always be provided when selling sheep not for slaughter.</p> <p>Records should be securely and retrievably retained for at least five years.</p>
RBP provision(s)	<p>Queensland legislation requires a Certificate of Health for all entry of sheep. The information on the Certificate of Health mirrors that of the SHS and enables producers to demonstrate compliance with Queensland entry requirements.</p> <p>It is intended to amend legislation to provide for use of a SHS in lieu of a Certificate of Health for entry to the state.</p>
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	As above, use of Certificates of Health is monitored, with a high level of compliance.
Standard	Technical information and operational aspects of the RBP are actively communicated to producers, agents and

	advisers
Guidelines	<p>Key aspects of the plan that need to be communicated to ensure producers are aware of their obligations are identified.</p> <p>A strategy to communicate these key messages is developed and implemented.</p> <p>The group should consider whether signs into the area are required.</p> <p>The group should also determine opportunities for the area that may provide trading advantages for them.</p> <p>All flock owners in the group should be provided with a copy of the RBP and business rules.</p>
RBP provision(s)	Available tools will be used to promote OJD management to the industry.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	<p>Entry requirements are well known within the industry and Biosecurity Queensland believes that there is a high rate of compliance.</p> <p>As a low-prevalence area, it has been difficult to stimulate sheep producers to recognise OJD management as a high priority.</p>
Standard	Compliance is audited and performance is reported at an agreed frequency.
Guidelines	<p>Compliance with the RBP should be audited annually and performance of the group is reported to relevant personnel, which may include the state CVO and other RBAs.</p> <p>Auditing may be conducted internally, but for a higher level of transparency should be conducted by an</p>

	<p>independent auditor or the department of primary industries.</p> <p>The audit should determine whether the group adequately meets the criteria set out in the RBP. Non-compliances with the RBP should be identified as minor, major or critical. Outcomes of the audit including any corrective actions should be implemented according to the level of risk that they impose; critical non-compliances must be corrected immediately.</p> <p>The group should meet to prepare for the RBP audit and to review the RBP. The Plan should be assessed for its level of support by the producers, the effectiveness of the plan, benefits and costs, both past and future.</p> <p>Annual reporting should include the numbers of flocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infected at the start and end of each reporting year ▪ Detected with infection during each year ▪ Resolved from Infected status during each year.
RBP provision(s)	The RBP commits Queensland to reporting annually on compliance with the RBP.
Actions and outcomes to comply with standard	<p>This report satisfies the reporting requirement.</p> <p>It is to be circulated to to the Queensland government, AgForce, and Approved Regional Biosecurity Plan Areas. The report will also be provided to the Livestock Production Conditions Steering Committee, Sheepmeat Council of Australia and WoolProducers Australia for information.</p>

Summary of Findings:

	Non-compliances	Corrective action required
Critical		
Major		
Minor	<p>Extension to the industry in Queensland has been difficult to achieve during the audited period as OJD management has a low priority in low-prevalence areas, especially in a context of reliance on regulatory prevention and control. This has resulted in a poor uptake of the SHS for intra-state movements, although these are considered low-risk.</p>	<p>Extension on OJD prevention is planned through joint work between 'Leading Sheep' and LBN in late 2015.</p> <p>The introduction of the Biosecurity Act in mid-2016 is also expected to stimulate producers to actively adopt their share of biosecurity responsibility.</p>

Auditor Lawrence Gavey

Date 13 January 2015