

AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY EMERGENCY PLAN

AUSVETPLAN

Operational Procedures Manual

Public relations

Version 3.0, 2007

AUSVETPLAN is a series of technical response plans that describe the proposed Australian approach to an emergency animal disease incident. The documents provide guidance based on sound analysis, linking policy, strategies, implementation, coordination and emergency-management plans.

Primary Industries Ministerial Council

This operational procedures manual forms part of:

AUSVETPLAN Edition 3

This manual will be reviewed regularly. Suggestions and recommendations for amendments should be forwarded to:

AUSVETPLAN — Animal Health Australia
Manager, Veterinary Services
Suite 15, 26–28 Napier Close
Deakin ACT 2600
Tel: 02 6232 5522; Fax: 02 6232 5511
Email: admin@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Approved citation: Animal Health Australia (2007). Operational procedures manual: Public relations (Version 3.0). Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN), Edition 3, Primary Industries Ministerial Council, Canberra, ACT.

Publication record:

Edition 1: 1991
Edition 2:
 Version 2.0, 1996 (major update)
Edition 3:
 Version 3.0, 2007 (major update)

AUSVETPLAN is available on the internet at:

http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/eadp/ausvetplan_home.cfm

© Commonwealth of Australia and each of its states and territories, 2007

ISBN 0 642 24506 1 (printed version)

ISBN 1 876 71438 7 (electronic version)

This work is copyright and, apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced without written permission from the publishers, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and Animal Health Australia, acting on behalf of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to AUSVETPLAN – Animal Health Australia (see above).

The publishers give no warranty that the information contained in AUSVETPLAN is correct or complete and shall not be liable for any loss howsoever caused, whether due to negligence or other circumstances, arising from use of or reliance on this code.

EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE WATCH HOTLINE

1800 675 888

The Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline is a toll-free telephone number that connects callers to the relevant state or territory officer to report concerns about any potential emergency disease situation. Anyone suspecting an emergency disease outbreak should use this number to get immediate advice and assistance.

Preface

This operational procedures manual for public relations activities in the event of an emergency animal disease incident is an integral part of the **Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan**, or **AUSVETPLAN (Edition 3)**. AUSVETPLAN structures and functions are described in the **AUSVETPLAN Summary Document**.

This manual has been produced in accordance with the procedures described in the AUSVETPLAN **Summary Document** and in consultation with Australian national, state and territory governments and industry. It was approved by AHC 12 (out of session). It is designed to ensure the fast and effective management of public relations and media liaison at the local, state, national and international levels. In the event of an impending or declared animal disease emergency, this would involve:

- a system to handle an accurate and up-to-date *outflow* of information to stakeholders, the media and the public; and
- readily accessible points of contact for handling *incoming* requests for information from stakeholders, the media and the public.

Where in this manual text has been placed in square brackets [xxx], this indicates that that aspect of the manual remains contentious or is under development; such text is not part of the official manual. The issues will be worked on by experts and relevant text included at a future date.

Detailed instructions for the field implementation of AUSVETPLAN are contained in the disease strategies, operational procedures manuals, management manuals and wild animal manual. Industry-specific information is given in the relevant enterprise manuals. The full list of AUSVETPLAN manuals that may need to be accessed in an emergency is shown below.

AUSVETPLAN manuals¹

Disease strategies

- Individual strategies for each of 30 diseases
- Bee diseases and pests
- Response policy briefs (for diseases not covered by individual manuals)

Operational procedures manuals

- Decontamination
- Destruction of animals
- Disposal
- Public relations
- Valuation and compensation
- Livestock welfare and management

Wild animal manual

- Wild animal response strategy

Enterprise manuals

- Artificial breeding centres
- Dairy processing
- Feedlots
- Meat processing
- Poultry industry
- Saleyards and transport
- Veterinary practices
- Zoos

Management manuals

- Control centres management (Parts 1 and 2)
- Animal Emergency Management Information System
- Laboratory preparedness

Summary document

¹ The complete series of AUSVETPLAN documents is available on the internet at: http://www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/eadp/ausvetplan_home.cfm

Contents

Preface.....	3
1 Introduction.....	9
1.1 Background.....	9
1.2 Legislation.....	10
1.3 Why is public relations important in an EAD response?	10
1.4 Core principles	12
1.5 Public relations in an EAD response.....	12
2 AUSVETPLAN.....	13
2.1 Purpose of AUSVETPLAN.....	13
2.2 Summaries of diseases covered by AUSVETPLAN.....	13
3 Phases of an EAD response	14
3.1 Preparations.....	14
3.2 The alert phase	15
3.2.1 The state/territory PR manager.....	16
3.2.2 The national PR manager.....	17
3.3 The operational phase.....	18
Milestones for PR opportunities	18
3.4 The stand-down phase.....	19
4 National arrangements.....	20
4.1 Policy and strategies.....	20
4.2 Primary Industries National Communications Network	21
4.3 Industry engagement/involvement.....	24
4.3.1 The response phase.....	24
5 Public relations activities during the EAD response operational phase	26
5.1 Media spokespersons	26
5.2 The local PR officer	26
5.2.1 Immediate priorities	28
5.2.2 What to do on arrival at the LDCC.....	28
5.2.3 LDCC PR priorities – proactive.....	29

5.2.4	LDCC PR priorities – reactive.....	31
5.3	The state/territory PR manager	32
5.3.1	Outbreaks in only one state or territory	33
5.3.2	Outbreaks in more than one state or territory	33
5.3.3	At the beginning of an EAD response	33
5.3.4	Target groups	34
5.3.5	Regular newsletter.....	34
5.4	The national PR manager	34
5.4.1	Outbreaks in only one state or territory	34
5.4.2	Outbreaks in more than one state or territory	35
5.4.3	At the beginning of an EAD response	35
5.4.4	Coordination of PR activities with other agencies.....	36
6	Public relations policy and practice	38
6.1	News media policy	38
6.1.1	Don't play favourites with the media.....	38
6.1.2	Why it pays to be first.....	38
6.1.3	Handling interviews	39
6.1.4	Making the best use of television	40
6.1.5	Using radio to advantage	40
6.1.6	Electronic eavesdropping by news media	41
6.1.7	Identification cards for the media	41
6.2	Media releases and handouts	41
6.2.1	Releases by the Australian or state/territory chief veterinary officer	41
6.2.2	Releases by state/territory PR managers and local PR officers.....	41
6.3	State/territory news conferences.....	42
6.4	Media requests to enter infected premises or dangerous contact premises.....	43
6.4.1	Media helicopters	44
6.4.2	Media access to laboratories.....	45
6.5	Dealing with misinformation	45
6.6	Managing criticism.....	45
6.7	Follow-up – for the record	46
Appendix 1	Disease control centre structures	47
Glossary		49
Abbreviations		55
Index		57

Tables

Table 1 Roles of local, state/territory and national PR officers..... 27

Figures

Figure 1 Possible communication pathways in the investigation and alert phases of an EAD response 16

Figure 2 Primary Industries National Communications Network..... 22

Figure 3 High-level national communications group 25

Figure A1.1 Organisational structure of a state disease control headquarters (SDCHQ) 47

Figure A1.2 Organisational structure of a local disease control centre (LDCC) [..... 48

1 Introduction

An adage in crisis communications states that at least 50 per cent of a response in an emergency is communications. A critical success factor in the response to emergency animal disease (EAD) is the effectiveness with which governments and industry communicate with the community and other stakeholders. Timely, clearly articulated, coordinated, well-planned and well-delivered public communications substantially shape people's willingness and capacity to help resolve the emergency. The level of cooperation from producers and affected communities, trust by consumers in response actions, and market access outcomes, all hinge on how well response actions and strategies are explained during an emergency.

1.1 Background

Australian agriculture benefits enormously from its freedom from the more devastating diseases that affect livestock industries in other parts of the world. The introduction of an exotic animal disease to Australia, or the spread of some endemic or emerging animal diseases, could cause serious production losses to our livestock industries, jeopardise exports of livestock and livestock products, impact negatively on broad sections of the economy, and perhaps have serious public health implications.

The potential economic, social, political and environmental consequences of an outbreak are enormous. The Productivity Commission has estimated that a large-scale outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease would cost Australia about \$13 billion² – a figure widely regarded as conservative. A single case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, or 'mad cow disease') in Canada in 2003 cost the Canadian beef industry around \$22 million per day in lost export earnings and had major socioeconomic consequences for the broader community. Japan's outbreak of BSE in 2001 cost at least \$4.7 billion up to April 2002. In 2002, West Nile virus cost the United States an estimated \$108 million in human patient costs alone. In 2003, avian influenza in the Netherlands was estimated to cost \$174 million in the first month.

It is essential that effective contingency plans and competency-assessed, trained personnel are available to counter any EAD that penetrates Australia's quarantine barriers or otherwise causes an emergency.

The Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN) is Australia's coordinated national response plan for the control and eradication of EADs.

Generally, Australia's policy is to eradicate the EAD as quickly as possible. In most cases a *stamping-out* policy will be employed, involving quarantine and movement controls, the slaughter and disposal of infected and exposed animals, the

² All \$ figures in this paragraph are in Australian dollars.

decontamination of infected premises, surveillance of susceptible animals, and restrictions on the activities of certain enterprises.

Depending on the disease and circumstances, these measures may be supplemented or replaced by vaccination, vector control campaigns, animal treatment and wild animal control. Infected and disease-free zones may be established to contain the disease agent and to facilitate trade.

A major EAD control campaign is a complex operation requiring rapid mobilisation of resources and the coordination of a diverse team of people in a whole-of-government and industry response. The EAD response requires input from all tiers of government and from a range of portfolios, and may need to address financial, social, economic, human and animal health, trade and recovery issues.

1.2 Legislation

In Australia, each state or territory has operational responsibility for the control and eradication of animal diseases, whether endemic or exotic, within its borders. Each jurisdiction therefore administers its own EAD legislation and supports the legislation with emergency services arrangements. Together, these provide regulatory powers for all essential EAD response measures.

Commonwealth legislation includes powers under the *Quarantine Act 1908* that are available to support the states and territories where appropriate.

1.3 Why is public relations important in an EAD response?

Effective communication is essential to any organisation's business, particularly during an emergency or crisis.

Public relations (PR) is a well-established communications and management function. It is defined by the Public Relations Institute of Australia as 'the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics'.³ Various responsibilities fall under the PR umbrella, including advertising and publicity, media liaison, employee and community relations, and marketing and promotion.

This manual outlines how communications will be managed during an EAD response using a PR process known as 'emergency' or 'crisis' communication. Crisis communication is a tool for managing PR and media relations during crises or emergencies that have the potential to damage or destroy the image and/or functioning of an organisation. In an EAD response, PR will be handled at the local, state/territory and national levels by designated communications personnel.

Any report of a possible EAD outbreak in Australia will attract media interest. An actual outbreak of a disease, such as foot-and-mouth disease, rabies or avian influenza, will be front-page news across the nation and in many overseas

³ <http://www.pria.com.au/aboutus/cid/122/parent/0/t/aboutus>

countries. It can also be expected to dominate television and radio coverage, including leading talk-back programs.

Public reaction will inevitably be characterised by a sense of urgency, and the situation will be perceived as potentially damaging or perilous. In an emergency, people fear that something sinister is happening over which they have little or no control. This fear will be heightened by a lack of accurate and timely information – a situation that is commonly encountered at the start of any outbreak. Professionals are trained to cope dispassionately with such ambiguity, but it can be terrifying for ordinary citizens. People who have little knowledge about the nature and effect of an exotic disease (especially one that has the potential to infect humans) will naturally fear the worst for themselves and their families, animals and livelihoods. They could react quite strongly against all Australian livestock and livestock-based products.

PR that is designed to satisfy the legitimate demands for information from stakeholders, the public and the media will go a long way towards calming anxiety based on ignorance and fear. Effective PR will also help to build the public confidence and media cooperation upon which a successful EAD response may depend.

Proper application of the basic principles of PR will ensure that the public understands and appreciates the need for emergency measures that may temporarily have an adverse impact on them. An informed and supportive community, rather than angry and distressed individuals, will ultimately enhance efforts to deal with an emergency.

During an EAD response, and for some time afterwards, PR efforts will also be crucial in rebuilding domestic and international consumer confidence in Australian livestock and livestock-based products.

As with other aspects of the EAD response, it is essential to plan crisis communication activities in advance. This includes:

- well-planned and rehearsed crisis communication strategies;
- easily accessible hardware, software and stores; and
- competency-trained communications staff.

Equally important will be the need to ensure that this advance planning is articulated and understood by those likely to be involved in the process.

In an emergency, communications between various 'publics' can be managed through a number of channels. Among these are:

- direct contact with affected or concerned individuals in person or by phone, fax, mail or the internet;
- group meetings; and
- the news media.

In the atmosphere of an emergency, the news media can either become part of the solution to the problem or, if mishandled, part of the problem. Cultivating a professional working relationship with the media under stressful emergency conditions is therefore a critical element in an effective EAD response. This relationship needs to be fostered well in advance of any disease emergency.

1.4 Core principles

The overall principle for effective communications in an EAD response is to explain policies, plans and practices to all stakeholders clearly, consistently, openly and quickly. The key principles that underpin this are as follows:

- Be honest, open and inclusive.
- Ensure that the facts are right.
- Correct mistakes as soon as possible.
- Provide information that is up to date in a timely manner.
- Provide as much local or regional detail as possible.
- Tailor information to different audiences.
- Communicate internally.

1.5 Public relations in an EAD response

The **Control Centres Management Manual, Part 1** includes further details about the management of an EAD response. **Part 2** of the same manual provides job descriptions for all the personnel involved in a response, including PR personnel.

2 AUSVETPLAN

2.1 Purpose of AUSVETPLAN

The purpose of AUSVETPLAN is to:

- provide policy and guidelines for the consistent management of an emergency animal disease (EAD) response by appropriately trained personnel in the affected state or territory;
- provide a coherent basis for emergency disease plans;
- ensure the compatibility of operation and procedures between national, state and territory animal health authorities and emergency management organisations;
- improve the technical validity of the underlying assumptions in the development of strategies to combat disease emergencies;
- identify deficiencies in the technical knowledge required to combat a disease emergency, and establish research priorities;
- provide a focus for training personnel in appropriate operational responses and procedures; and
- provide guidelines for the development of standard operating procedures for response personnel in combat agencies.

For further information on AUSVETPLAN planning processes, and for a list of current manuals, see the **AUSVETPLAN Summary Document**.

2.2 Summaries of diseases covered by AUSVETPLAN

The **Summary Document** provides an overview of the diseases and pests currently covered by AUSVETPLAN. Tables in the Summary Document list all the EADs included in the EAD Response Agreement between Australian governments and the livestock industries, whether the disease is listed by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE, formerly Office International des Epizooties), the species affected by each disease and the response strategy.

In any EAD response, a public awareness campaign will be an important factor in encouraging cooperation from industry and the community. Fact sheets are available for each disease covered by an AUSVETPLAN disease strategy manual. The fact sheets contain material for briefing notes, media use and nontechnical readers. Information on EADs not covered by an AUSVETPLAN manual is found in the **AUSVETPLAN Response Policy Briefs Manual**.

3 Phases of an EAD response

The emergency animal disease (EAD) response process outlined in AUSVETPLAN includes four phases: investigation, alert, operational and stand-down. Public relations (PR) personnel are directly involved in the alert, operational and stand-down phases.

This **Public Relations Manual** comes into immediate effect when AUSVETPLAN enters the alert phase.

The AUSVETPLAN **Summary Document** provides a concise overview of the various phases of an EAD response and their implications. Familiarisation with this document at the beginning of any response is advised.

3.1 Preparations

The foundations for successful communications during an EAD response are laid well before an incident, with a focus on preparedness to support the PR function in the response. The following checklist is useful.

1. Identify key communications staff and their roles, and backup personnel, ensuring that there are adequate numbers of staff for response 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, if required.
2. Ensure that PR staff are made aware of all developments immediately.
3. Identify media spokespeople and experts ('talent').
4. Provide training for key communications staff and backups.
5. Establish and maintain communication networks (government, industry and media).
6. List those people to be contacted in an emergency (peak industry bodies, associations, government departments, etc).
7. Generate a list of key media (specialist and mainstream).
8. Create a list of interstate departmental media officers involved in the response.
9. Create a list of key messages and how these will be used in an emergency.
10. Generate common questions and answers (relate to key messages).
11. Draft media releases and statements (relate to key messages).
12. Establish approval processes necessary for media releases to ensure that clearance is handled promptly.
13. Create web-based information that can be released immediately a response begins.
14. Prepare advertising material to be used in an emergency.
15. Establish telephone information arrangements.
16. Identify and understand media centre arrangements.

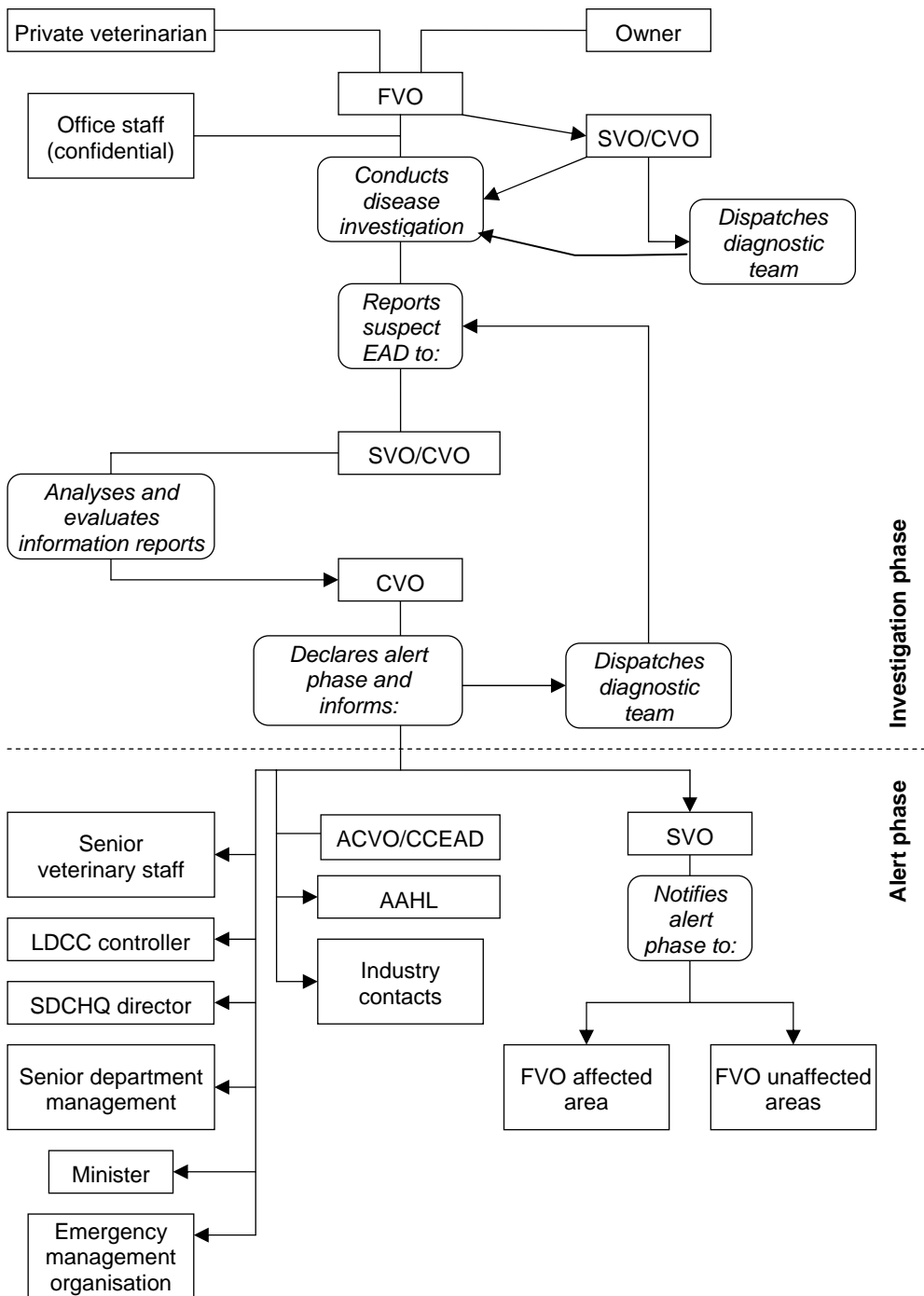
17. Collect and summarise market and attitude research (eg on consumer perceptions of food safety and animal welfare).
18. Document communication arrangements and constantly update them.

3.2 The alert phase

The alert phase exists when the state or territory chief veterinary officer (CVO) declares that there is a reasonably held suspicion of an EAD in his/her jurisdiction. In this phase, the CVO ensures that all stakeholders are alerted and key response staff are placed on stand-by.

Under the EAD Response Agreement, the CVO needs to notify the chair of the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD) within 24 hours of becoming aware of a disease incident; otherwise, reimbursement by the cost-sharing parties may be withheld. An incident is defined in the agreement as a confirmed EAD or a reasonably held suspicion of an EAD.

Figure 1 shows the internal communication pathways in the alert phase. Note the linkages and the number of stakeholders the PR team will need to work with.



AAHL = Australian Animal Health Laboratory; ACVO = Australian Chief Veterinary Officer; CCEAD = Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases; CVO = chief veterinary officer; EAD = emergency animal disease; FVO = field veterinary officer; LDCC = local disease control centre; SDCHQ = state or territory disease control headquarters; SVO = senior veterinary officer

Figure 1 Possible communication pathways in the investigation and alert phases of an EAD response

3.2.1 The state/territory PR manager

When the state/territory PR manager receives advice of an alert, they will contact the CVO and the national PR manager (see Section 3.2.2). The state/territory PR manager will seek the information necessary to produce a draft media statement on the situation (which should include a fact sheet providing technical details), and

in doing so will establish himself/herself as the nominated communication contact of the affected jurisdiction or 'lead agency' and the definitive source of information for the alert stage of the response.

Depending on the CVO's assessment, state/territory emergency-management authorities may activate the animal diseases emergency subplan of the jurisdiction's disaster plan. In this case, the state/territory PR manager will continue to work through the CVO, but will need to coordinate activities with the state/territory media officer (whose function is to coordinate all disaster media activity across the jurisdiction) and continue to liaise with the national PR manager.

The state/territory PR manager will then go to the state or territory disease control headquarters (SDCHQ), set up the SDCHQ PR unit, and make arrangements (if appropriate) to set up and staff a local disease control centre (LDCC) PR unit in the affected area. The state/territory PR manager is also responsible for informing and updating the Primary Industries National Communications Network (NCN, see Section 4.2) on an ongoing basis.

3.2.2 The national PR manager

The national PR manager will participate in emergency preparedness activities, particularly the development of communication strategies and the delivery of awareness activities on national and international issues. The national PR manager will also maintain a watching brief on developments in animal and food safety and provide information on any potential issue to the CVO. Other activities of the national PR manager include the following:

- Develop pre-emptive information for media, including question-and-answer (Q&A) responses, fact sheets and talking points, in cooperation with the Australian CVO.
- Initiate contact with communication officers of other agencies (Australian Government, state/territory and peak industry bodies) that may be involved in the incident in order to convene a high-level national communications group of NCN. The NCN communications group will develop a PR strategy, joint Q&A responses, fact sheets and talking points for consideration by CCEAD and the national EAD management group (NMG; see Section 4.1).
- Wherever possible, pre-empt contact with the media in order to explain the incident using agreed material.
- Attend meetings of CCEAD and NMG to help determine an appropriate national communication strategy.
- Liaise with affected states to analyse the situation on the ground from a communications perspective. There is also an important role to play in relaying views between jurisdictions to ensure an effective two-way communication flow.

When approval is received from NMG, an agreed strategy will be implemented, including the issue of a media statement. The CVO and the state/territory PR manager can then make the necessary immediate responses to media inquiries.

3.3 The operational phase

The operational phase of AUSVETPLAN commences when the presence of an EAD is confirmed and the CVO determines that an operational response must begin, or when advised by CCEAD or NMG.

Appropriate communication activities that should be considered at either the federal or state/territory government level include the following:

- Alert key communications staff.
- Set up a media room and media centre.
- Write talking points.
- Write press release.
- Call the minister's office.
- Hold press conferences and media briefings (alert media, brief spokesperson, organise venue).
- Prepare and record radio grabs.
- Prepare maps.
- Go live with website information (frequently asked questions – FAQs, situation report, World Organisation for Animal Health [OIE, formerly Office International des Epizooties] notification, maps).
- Obtain vision for pooled television news.
- Obtain media print images.
- Arrange community service announcements or place advertising material.
- Organise in-house secretariat support.
- Alert overseas posts and provide talking points.
- Alert translation services.
- Prepare internal news for agency employees.
- Ensure communications people are on email group lists.
- Screen email traffic.
- Monitor media and obtain coverage as appropriate.

Details of the specific responsibilities of the national PR manager, state/territory PR manager and local PR officers during the operational phase are in Section 5.

Milestones for PR opportunities

Various 'milestones' will be reached during the EAD response. These events are good opportunities to communicate with domestic and international 'publics'. Milestones might include:

- the lifting of quarantine;
- the negative results of trace-backs;
- the completion of disinfection of infected premises (IPs);

- the installation of sentinel animals;
- the restoration of exports from areas of Australia that are 'zoned' disease-free; and
- the restocking of former IPs after any necessary spelling and sentinel placement periods.

3.4 The stand-down phase

The stand-down phase of AUSVETPLAN occurs when the threat from an EAD is no longer present and/or most EAD investigation and operational activities cease in a given area. The control or eradication of the EAD might take weeks or months, and eradication might never be achieved. Restoration of full trading activity in live animals, meat and other livestock products and any other affected industry can be expected to take some time. Addressing trading issues both domestically and internationally begins in the alert phase.

Milestones reached during the stand-down phase will provide a good opportunity to communicate with domestic and international 'publics'. An example would be the formal notification by the Australian CVO to the OIE that the whole of Australia has now met the international standard to be considered free from the EAD that caused the outbreak.

In the stand-down phase, after LDCCs and the SDCHQ cease operation, PR activities will be devolved by CCEAD to the Australian CVO and the national PR manager (for issues relating to trade and other national issues) and to the respective state/territory CVOs and their PR managers (for issues relating to the response).

Other key communication activities in the stand-down phase include conducting a debrief of communications staff to:

- determine what worked well and what things really made a difference;
- judge how well the communication plan worked;
- assess perceived deficiencies in equipment and accommodation;
- assess the news coverage and its impact;
- consider other positive and negative aspects of the crisis communication response effort; and
- consider the lessons learnt.

Lessons learnt will then be integrated into emergency communication plans.

4 National arrangements

4.1 Policy and strategies

The fundamental aim of the national emergency animal disease (EAD) response policy is to attempt eradication of the disease while this is a feasible option.

Where applicable and cost effective, the principal response option is usually eradication by 'stamping out', which involves the slaughter and sanitary disposal of all infected and in-contact animals and decontamination of infected premises (IPs).

Where stamping out is not appropriate, other methods of control will be applied. These might include:

- geographical containment;
- vaccination;
- medication;
- vector control; and/or
- husbandry practices.

The chief veterinary officer (CVO) in the state or territory in which the outbreak occurs is responsible for ensuring that the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) is sent specimens for diagnosis. That state/territory is also responsible for implementing disease control measures (in accordance with relevant legislation), and will make ongoing decisions on follow-up disease control measures, in consultation with the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), the Australian and state/territory governments, and representatives of affected industries.

The CCEAD is convened as required, usually by teleconference. The committee is chaired by the Australian CVO and includes all state and territory CVOs (or their nominees), one representative nominated by CSIRO Animal Health, one representative of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service nominated by the Australian CVO, Animal Health Australia, one representative of each affected livestock industry, and one representative of the livestock industry parties collectively.

The national public relations (PR) manager for the EAD response attends CCEAD meetings as an observer.

CCEAD's terms of reference require it to:

- consult and advise on emergency terrestrial and aquatic animal health events;⁴
- make judgments and provide advice about the diagnosis of an EAD, including for the purpose of invoking the EAD Response Agreement and cost-sharing arrangements;
- develop recommendations about eradication or control methods;
- advise the national management group (NMG) on the EAD response, including reporting on budgeted, committed and actual expenditure on response plans;
- advise the Primary Industries Standing Committee, and where appropriate the NMG, of significant developments during the EAD response, of the end of the emergency and of any necessary post-emergency action, such as further research and revision of contingency plans; and
- help Australia meet its international EAD reporting obligations.

The role of the NMG is to decide on whether cost-sharing will be invoked (following advice from the CCEAD) and to manage the national policy and resourcing needs. The NMG is convened for the specific outbreak. Membership includes the chief executive officers of the Australian Government and state and territory governments, and the presidents or equivalent of the affected industry bodies. These arrangements are explained in more detail in Section 3 of the **Summary Document**.

The control measures for the EAD will be chosen according to the principles of control and eradication outlined in Section 2 of the relevant AUSVETPLAN Disease Strategy and the policies outlined in Section 3 of the relevant strategy.

The EAD response will be delivered through the state or territory disease control headquarters (SDCHQ) and, if necessary, one or more local disease control centres (LDCCs). For further information on disease control centres, see the **Control Centres Management Manual, Part 1**.

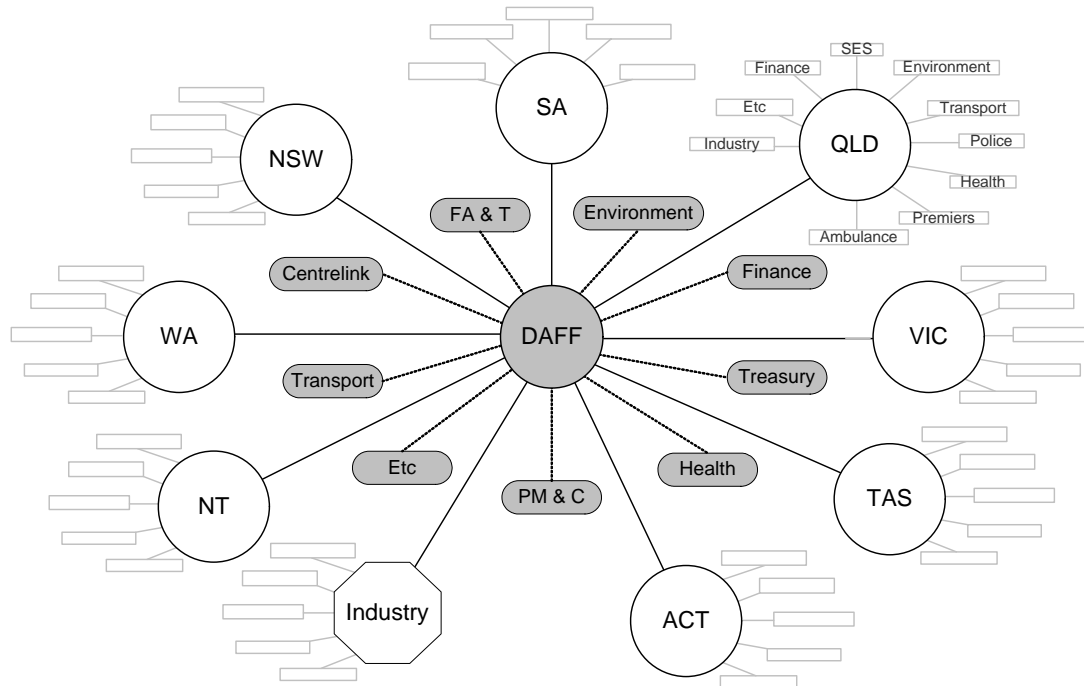
For further information on the EAD response structure and the EAD Response Agreement, see the **Summary Document**.

4.2 Primary Industries National Communications Network

One of the major lessons from the 2001 outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the United Kingdom was the need to ensure consistency in public comment in order to maintain stakeholder confidence in the response to the emergency. The Primary Industries National Communications Network (NCN) has been established in Australia for this purpose.

⁴ In aquatic animal health events, state/territory directors of fisheries may substitute for, or collaborate with, the CVO on the committee.

In line with a Council of Australian Governments memorandum of understanding on foot-and-mouth disease, membership of the NCN for all EAD incidents includes communication managers from all jurisdictions, who assist in generating consistent public comment from key spokespeople during an EAD response. Membership of the NCN also includes representatives from Animal Health Australia and a range of key stakeholder groups, including industry. Figure 2 illustrates the reach of the NCN, the interaction between jurisdictions and industry, and the collaborative nature of communications on EAD emergencies.



KEY

Shaded boxes: Australian Government departments

DAFF = Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; FA & T = Foreign Affairs and Trade; PM & C = Prime Minister and Cabinet

Unshaded circles/ boxes: state and territory government agencies (examples shown for Queensland only).

Hexagon: Peak industry bodies (including Animal Health Australia). These will form an essential part of any effective communication process and will have mechanisms in place that are similar to government networks.

Figure 2 Primary Industries National Communications Network

The NCN performs a high-level crisis communication role during responses to pest and disease emergencies and focuses on preparedness activities at other times. During a response, the network develops and agrees to use consistent talking points, identifies key spokespeople and devises strategic approaches to crisis communication.

As many as 200 agencies could be directly engaged in a large-scale EAD response in Australia, and the media could legitimately approach any of them for comment. The NCN enables a few people to effectively coordinate the overall communication efforts of many. For example, the 12 Australian Government agencies that would be involved are connected to the national communications arrangements by one person. In each state - Queensland, for example (see Figure 2) - more than 20 agencies (including the State Emergency Service, ambulance, police, transport,

health, etc) are similarly connected to the national arrangements through one representative.

The network has sponsored the development of tools that may be used during a major EAD response, including:

- pre-approved television, radio and newspaper advertising material for immediate use, in multiple languages;
- national telephone information arrangements, through Centrelink;
- a national agriculture emergency website (<http://www.outbreak.gov.au>);
- a course to train PR professionals for a role in the response;
- a secure extranet site to provide an ongoing repository for crisis communication material and to share information among stakeholders during a response;
- a pool of accredited government PR officers to undertake a communication role in a major pest or disease emergency;
- interpreter services to support foreign media inquiries and the reporting of disease by farmers from non-English-speaking backgrounds;
- a fully operational media centre for national briefing purposes; and
- a rapid response capability that includes a public communication component.

These arrangements were developed in cooperation with, and are supported by, all jurisdictions and industry.

During a response, the NCN's role is to advise on, oversee and implement the communications strategy agreed to by the NMG (see Section 4.1). Its members also play key public relations roles in the national coordination centre (NCC) and the SDCHQ. The NCC is a centre established by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to provide national leadership and coordination in response to an emergency animal disease.

At the time of a pest or disease emergency, the NCN will form a high-level national communications group to provide strategic advice to the NMG. Chaired by DAFF, membership of this high-level group will vary, depending on the nature of the disease or pest, the industries affected and where the outbreak occurred. It will include the affected state or territory, Animal Health Australia, the relevant industry groups (including the peak body, the National Farmers' Federation and the Australian Food and Grocery Council) and other Australian Government agencies as appropriate. For example, in an avian influenza outbreak, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing would be represented because of the zoonotic potential of the disease, as well as Food Standards Australia New Zealand because of food safety considerations. Overall, 13 Australian Government departments and agencies can be called on to be represented on the high-level national communications group during a response (see Section 5.4.4).

4.3 Industry engagement/involvement

The NCN provides a mechanism to facilitate greater engagement and cooperation of industry in the communication component of a response to a disease emergency. The inclusion of industry on the NCN is not a requirement under the EAD Response Agreement; however, a more inclusive NCN, particularly during an emergency response, is consistent with the principles that underpin the agreement. The benefit of using the NCN is that it is well established and understood.

4.3.1 The response phase

The objective of establishing better communication arrangements with industry is to ensure that industry is provided with an opportunity to fully participate in the PR element of an EAD response. This allows industry organisations to communicate more effectively with their stakeholders in relation to an emergency and to have a greater say in the direction of the public communication effort. Industry's involvement with government in creating and fine-tuning public messages should also contribute to consistent public communication with key stakeholders, the community and the media.

To achieve this objective, the following matters will come into effect during an emergency:

- The industry directly affected by the disease will be formally represented by its peak industry communication manager or nominee on the NCN. Industry membership will depend on the nature of the disease and which industry/ies is directly impacted. The industry nominee will work closely with the communication manager of Animal Health Australia, who will participate as a member of the communications team in the NCC during a major national emergency. The industry and Animal Health Australia nominees will be the primary conduit to signatory organisations of the EAD Response Agreement.
- The National Farmers' Federation and the Australian Food and Grocery Council will have an advisory role and will participate to the extent that they feel able to contribute on the NCN during significant national disease emergencies. These organisations will be conduits to industry parties that are not signatories to the EAD Response Agreement and will be responsible for communicating to their associated groups – including industry marketing and research and development corporations, downstream participants in marketing chains, and support and service organisations.

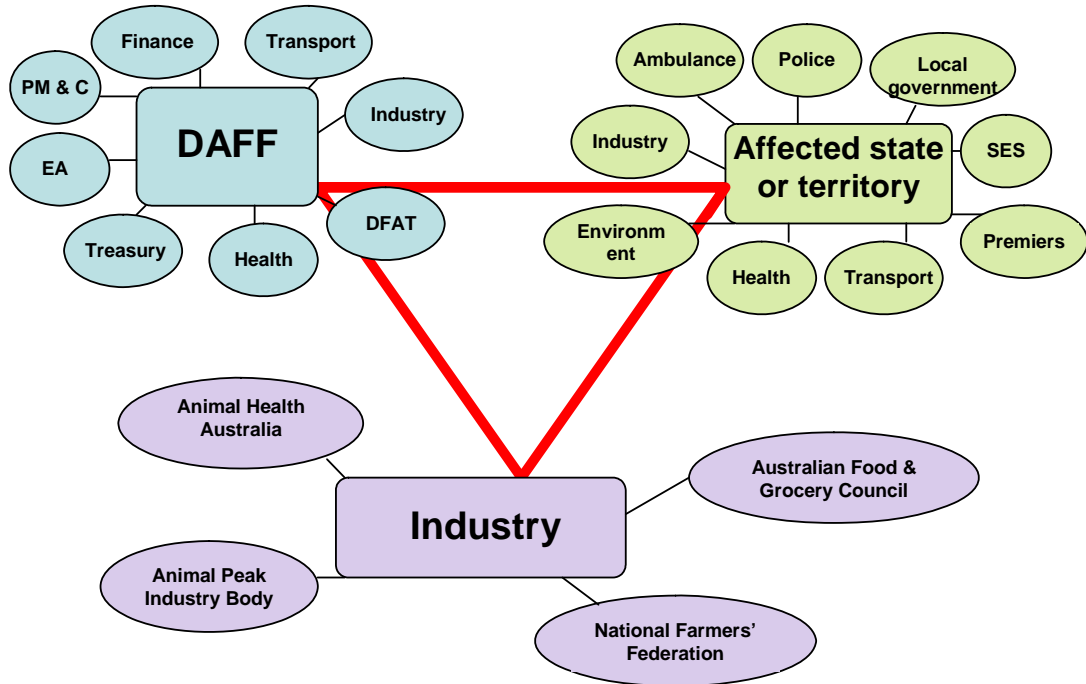
Duties of the high-level national communications group during the response phase will include:

- developing a communications strategy (including key messages and talking points, and potential spokespeople) for NMG consideration, approval and/or adoption as part of the response plan;
- sharing the above with relevant networks;
- being briefed as required on the current status of events and considering the communication aspects of these events;
- providing comment on information to be made public, such as media releases;
- identifying public communication issues that need to be addressed; and

- participating in teleconferences to discuss immediate priorities and strategies and to set future directions.

These arrangements, which are summarised in Figure 3, will require the Australian Government, the affected state(s) and industry to work closely together.

National Communications Network in an emergency animal disease or pest outbreak



KEY
Top left: Australian Government
 DAFF = Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; FA & T = Foreign Affairs and Trade; PM & C = Prime Minister and Cabinet; SES = State Emergency Service
Top right: State and territory government agencies
Bottom: Industry

Figure 3 High-level national communications group

5 Public relations activities during the EAD response operational phase

At all levels in an emergency animal disease (EAD) response, public relations (PR) should be supervised and implemented by experienced PR professionals, assisted by competency-accredited staff. Table 1 lists the main responsibilities of those in supervisory PR roles at the local, state/territory and national levels.

5.1 Media spokespersons

As far as possible, it is best if one person – nominated early in the EAD response – represents the official side of the response in the mass media. The choice of spokesperson, and the method of choosing them, will depend on the requirements of the affected state or territory's own emergency response plan, the scale of the outbreak, the nominee's workloads and other factors. Similarly, whether the spokesperson works from a local disease control centre (LDCC), the state or territory disease control headquarters (SDCHQ) or the jurisdiction's capital city will depend on the nature of the outbreak and response.

The media spokesperson should be authoritative, personable, very well briefed, and experienced in handling the media. If the chief veterinary officer (CVO), the LDCC controller, the SDCHQ director or other senior officials are too hard pressed to perform this role, a technical expert or a well-known industry spokesperson could fill the position.

For briefings and backgrounding, a nonexpert spokesperson could be assisted by relevant expert staff.

5.2 The local PR officer

The local PR officer will usually work from an LDCC. Appendix 1 includes a diagram of the organisational structure of an LDCC.

At the beginning of the EAD response, each local PR officer should read this section of the manual as a quick refresher on their role. They should also read the role description of the AUSVETPLAN local PR officer in the **Control Centres Management Manual, Part 2**. Taking a few minutes to read these documents could make the difference between success and distress in the whole PR effort.

If the area of the suspected or confirmed EAD outbreak is close to a state/territory capital, the roles of the local PR officer and the state/territory PR manager might be combined into the one job. If so, the role specified here for the local PR officer would be added to the job description for the state/territory PR manager.

Table 1 Roles of local, state/territory and national PR officers

Role	Local PR officer	State/territory PR manager	National PR manager
General responsibilities	With LDCC controller and technical manager, decide on a proactive local public information program and a response strategy for reacting to media and other demands; establish local PR priorities. Note: implement the program only after state/territory PR manager agrees.	Advise CVO, SDCHQ director, planning manager and other senior departmental and ministerial staff on PR issues. Attend CCEAD meetings (if in the affected state). Member of high-level national communications group.	Attend meetings of CCEAD and internal Critical Incident Task Force meetings. Advise senior DAFF and ministerial staff on PR issues. Chair high-level national communications group meetings.
Liaison with spokesperson	Establish who media spokesperson is; advise them on strategy.	Establish who media spokesperson is; advise them on strategy.	Establish who main national media spokesperson is; advise them on strategy.
Coordination	Liaise with state/territory PR manager, LDCC controller and LDCC planning manager.	Liaise with national PR manager, state/territory disaster PR coordinator and PR managers of relevant state departments involved in the response. Advise and coordinate local PR officer(s).	Liaise with state/territory PR managers through NCN. Liaise with PR managers of other relevant national agencies.
Setting up PR units	Set up LDCC media room. Organise front-of-house services for visitors and telephone callers.	Set up SDCHQ media unit and media conference room. Advise and supervise other SDCHQ PR and front-of-house staff.	Set up NCC media unit and media conference room. Advise and supervise other NCC PR and front-of-house staff.
Media statements and conferences	Draft local media statements (but not containing policy), handouts, maps (individual properties must not be readily identifiable) and other public and media material; clear with LDCC controller and state/territory PR manager, then distribute as PR organisation media protocols. Assist LDCC controller or planning manager at media conferences.	Draft initial ministerial media statement; clear with state/territory CVO; fax or email to CCEAD for clearance; distribute final version. Draft, clear and distribute subsequent media statements, videos, maps, fact sheets and other public and media information material. Organise media conferences.	Draft, clear and distribute media statements, talking points, photographs, videos, maps, fact sheets and other public and media information material. Organise media conferences. Activate and use the media monitoring, web and internal information distribution systems.
Liaison with interest groups	Liaise with local industry and interest groups.	Liaise with state industry and interest groups.	Liaise with national industry and interest groups.

CCEAD = Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases; CVO = chief veterinary officer; DAFF = Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; LDCC = local disease control centre; NCC = national coordination centre; NCN = Primary Industries National Communications Network; PR = public relations; SDCHQ = state or territory disease control headquarters.

5.2.1 Immediate priorities

The first priority will be to open lines of communication with the LDCC controller and the state/territory PR manager and arrange a system (fax, email, courier – whatever is quick and reliable) for the swift carriage back and forth to the SDCHQ of draft and cleared media and public announcements.

The second priority will be to check the list of stores, PR aids and equipment that will be needed at the LDCC.

Third, copies of any Australian Government, state, territory or joint media releases issued on the emergency to date must be obtained.

5.2.2 What to do on arrival at the LDCC

It is vital to remember that in an EAD response no local media releases must be issued or local interviews given without the express agreement of the state/territory PR manager. At the LDCC, no matter how hard pressed, the local PR officer should *not* put out any releases, give or arrange any interviews or answer any media questions until the state/territory PR manager gives approval for public announcements to begin. If journalists apply pressure, the local PR officer should offer to get back to them as soon as possible.

On arrival at the LDCC, the local PR officer should establish contact with the LDCC controller, the LDCC planning manager and the state/territory PR manager.

While the local PR officer has been travelling to the LDCC and establishing local arrangements, urgent decisions on a coordinated national EAD response will have been made by the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), the national management group (NMG), the state/territory PR manager, national and state/territory departments and ministers, and a range of agencies that deal with trade and international veterinary issues.

The next task is to set up the PR area. A separate PR room, close to but not in the LDCC operations room, is best. Media representatives can then be invited, or can invite themselves, into the PR room without compromising the overall security of the LDCC. The room should also be close to the area to be used for media conferences.

The PR room should have a telephone with at least two lines, computers, access to a printer, internet access, a fax, a photocopier and adequate supplies of paper and other PR essentials, such as mobile phones.

All contact lists for industry, media and essential services should be on hand (public phone books, personal phone lists, internal departmental phone lists, media guides, fax master lists, address label lists and so on).

Arrangements should be made to obtain copies of all official media releases as they become available and for copies to be provided immediately to the LDCC controller. These releases will become the basis for local releases, for briefing local and visiting media and for responding to public requests for information.

It will be important to initiate a proactive PR plan, in consultation with the LDCC controller, LDCC planning manager and the state/territory PR manager.

The local PR officer has an important role in identifying local media issues and should draft media releases for submission to the state/territory PR manager for approval. Unless all proposed media actions and releases are cleared with the state/territory PR manager, there is a risk that a 'local' release will be picked up by a press agency in Australia or overseas, producing negative responses from overseas representatives and trading partners. **In an EAD response, all media releases are potentially international.**

5.2.3 LDCC PR priorities — proactive

It is important that the local PR officer, in collaboration with the LDCC controller and the planning manager, establishes a *proactive LDCC PR plan* as a top priority and supervises its implementation by the LDCC PR unit. The messages to be marketed proactively could be about stock movement restrictions and similar local issues, which local producers, processors and the general public need for accurate and up-to-date information.

The communication channels for proactive local PR are discussed briefly below. The time taken up dealing with VIPs, local politicians, distressed farmers and so on should not be underestimated; backup may be needed.

Officials

Representatives of local and state farmer organisations, industry liaison officers, processors, stock agents, local government officials and any other VIPs who drop in to the LDCC or make contact can be important local channels for informal communication. The capacity of such people to influence public opinion should not be underestimated – they are as important in the PR equation as the mass media and need to be managed sensitively. To conserve LDCC resources, the local PR officer should concentrate on providing only factual information to these representatives. If they want to pursue or debate policy issues, they should be referred to the state/territory PR manager; if they want to discuss trade aspects, they should be referred to the national PR manager.

Owners

Liaison with owners of infected premises is also an important local PR function. In all likelihood, owners will be under considerable stress, and some advice on what they should say (and not say) if approached by the media will help them greatly. They should be informed that they are not obliged to give interviews and that they can contact the local PR officer for advice; this can avoid a later need to correct misinformation in the media. At all times, these contacts should be treated with appropriate sensitivity.

The industry liaison officer (see **Control Centres Management Manual, Part 2**, for a description of this position) will prove to be an invaluable resource to the PR officer, as they should have the necessary contacts and networks with owners and the wider community.

Community

It is essential to have reception staff at the LDCC to handle visits and telephone calls by concerned citizens. As far as is practicable, these enquiries should be responded to by PR staff who are well equipped with handouts, good information

and empathy with people in distress. PR staff assigned to this task should also know how and when to refer enquiries to the right person in the LDCC or the SDCHQ for specialised assistance.

Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline

The local PR officer should use the local media to advertise the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline (freecall 1800 675 888) as the number for reporting animals with signs of disease. The availability of this service may vary between jurisdictions; the local PR officer should first check with the state/territory PR manager that the number of qualified people staffing the line is sufficient to ensure that all calls are answered.

Local media releases

Other important local PR tools are the local media release (only if authorised by the state/territory PR manager) and interviews with the local press, specialist rural media (such as *Country Hour*), and the rural weeklies.

Advertisements

Paid advertisements could be used in the local papers to show the exact locations of quarantine and declared areas, movement controls and call centre telephone numbers to report animals with signs of disease, as well as biosecurity measures that should be adopted to contain the spread of disease.

Community service announcements

The nearest regional commercial television and radio stations could also be approached to run free announcements about the outbreak (commercial television and radio licences specify a certain amount of time for free announcements for community organisations). These announcements, usually 30 seconds to one minute long, could be produced by the station.

Direct mail

Non-media channels, such as direct mail, should not be neglected. Relevant information can be provided directly to all producers or households within a postcode area, addressed to either 'The householder' or 'The rural householder'; this can be facilitated by Australia Post.

Public meetings

Public meetings organised by the local PR unit or by local groups and addressed by the CVO, SDCHQ director, LDCC controller or the LDCC planning manager could be useful. Because people such as livestock owners, veterinarians and media staff could transmit the disease in some disease incidents, the CVO will need to assess the risk associated with public meetings before allowing them to be called as part of the PR process. PR officers should be alert to the presence of media and consider strategies to deflect possible criticism of response efforts. There may be benefits in excluding the media from public meetings, in order to encourage more open discussion.

5.2.4 LDCC PR priorities — reactive

The local PR officer should promptly meet media demands for information. Good relations with the media should be maintained, and well-informed stories provided. It may be necessary to refer the media to press conferences at set times or to arrange media pools for property visits.

The types of media demands that the local PR unit will need to meet, while also fulfilling the main priority of proactive local PR, are listed below.

Statements and interviews

'On the record' interviews should be given by the media spokesperson (see Section 5.1), assisted if necessary by a technical expert.

Television crews and photographers who want pictures

Requests for pictures could involve quarantine issues. To prevent breaches of quarantine by photographers, the local PR staff should actively help them to get the images they need.

If quarantine is a problem, local PR staff should consider using a 'media pool', in which one crew gets footage for television and one photographer gets still pictures, and the product is shared by all outlets.

For television stations, broadcast quality video stock footage on the disease involved in the outbreak should be provided, as well as pooled vision of affected properties. Such footage will be obtained by the ABC under a national agreement that has been negotiated by Emergency Management Australia for national emergencies involving agricultural pests or diseases.

Media who arrive at the LDCC and want 'on the record' interviews

This might necessitate close collaboration between the local PR officer, the state/territory PR manager, the LDCC controller and the LDCC planning manager.

In a serious EAD outbreak, it will be best to try to channel all interview requests into one or two media conferences per day, timed to follow regular situation updates, preferably at the SDCHQ. Advance warning of the times of these briefings will assist journalists. Any media conferences held at the LDCC must have input from the state/territory PR manager.

Secure extranet site

A secure extranet, within a password-protected website, has been established. This site is used as an ongoing repository for crisis communication materials. Various resources and aids are available on this site to help PR staff perform their role effectively during an EAD response. Some of these tools are also useful in ensuring consistent public messages. The resources on the site, which are constantly evolving and reviewed, include checklists, web images, fact sheets and talking points, as well as real-time information on the event. (Contact the national PR manager to arrange access to this password-protected site.)

Media who telephone from out of town

How out-of-town media are serviced will depend on the workloads of the local PR officer, the LDCC controller and the planning manager, and on the issues the media want to discuss.

If a journalist wants to cover eradication and stock movement issues and there is time to arrange interviews, the local PR officer should arrange them. Policy matters should be referred to the state/territory PR manager. Trade questions should be referred to the national PR manager.

5.3 The state/territory PR manager

The state/territory PR manager will play a key role in the SDCHQ's responsibility for the state/territory-wide coordination of the EAD response. Appendix 1 includes a diagram of the organisational structure of an SDCHQ.

Importantly, the SDCHQ has operational responsibilities in areas outside the restricted area (for which the LDCC is responsible). From the perspective of crisis communications, this may include liaison with the minister's office and other state/territory departments and jurisdictions. The state/territory PR manager will be part of the high-level national communications group that will come together during a response to devise a PR strategy for NMG and CCEAD consideration. Each state or territory has a crisis communications strategy that identifies these responsibilities at a local and state level.

The SDCHQ is responsible for the development and implementation of policy on media coverage, approves all media releases relating to policy and other sensitive issues, and will mainly handle the capital city media and national media.

The SDCHQ has overall responsibility for coordinating PR and media liaison at both the state and local levels; this means that SDCHQ and LDCC media personnel must work closely together.

The state/territory PR manager needs to ensure that appropriate, accurate, timely and adequate information about the response is provided, in order to:

- increase alertness for signs of disease and encourage early recognition and reporting;
- enhance knowledge of movement restrictions, disease control activities, relief and recovery support and other activities and issues;
- meet community expectations for information;
- ensure that the SDCHQ, the national coordination centre and industry provide consistent information about the response; and
- brief staff at the SDCHQ.

The SDCHQ PR section must ensure that relevant memoranda of understanding relating to communications (such as that for foot-and-mouth disease) are implemented if practicable and that they are consistent with the Primary Industries National Communications Network (NCN) arrangements.

5.3.1 Outbreaks in only one state or territory

If an EAD outbreak is confined to one state or territory, the PR manager for that jurisdiction has responsibility for all PR concerning the event, its extent and effect, and for the official state/territory EAD response. In such a case, Australian Government responsibility will be limited to those matters with national (that is, interstate) or international implications.

The state/territory PR manager should provide their Australian Government counterpart with copies of all draft and final state/territory news releases, and vice versa.

5.3.2 Outbreaks in more than one state or territory

In an EAD outbreak involving more than one state or territory, the following division of responsibility for media and public relations would come into force.

National media liaison

Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) media liaison and PR should relate to the overall extent and effect of the emergency, especially the trade implications, and the areas of responsibility of jurisdictions and organisations.

State/territory media liaison

State/territory media liaison and PR activities should be confined to matters relating to the particular state or territory, especially stock and product movement restrictions, the extent of the disease in the jurisdiction, and eradication measures.

5.3.3 At the beginning of an EAD response

The first priority of the state/territory PR manager is to establish good lines of communication with:

- the state/territory CVO and the SDCHQ director;
- the national PR manager; and
- the state/territory minister's office.

The second priority is to:

- supervise the establishment of the state/territory PR unit; and
- guide the local PR officers and assist them to become established in the LDCC.

The third priority is to contribute to the decision-making and briefing processes and the high-level national communications group.

The state/territory PR manager should be part of the jurisdiction's participation in the initial and subsequent CCEAD teleconferences, in order to be fully aware of the background to the emergency and the latest state of play, and to advise on PR when required. The manager's participation will also prevent inconsistencies in media statements issued by state/territory and national authorities.

The national PR manager and all state/territory counterparts will also need to alert their departments to the PR implications of any proposed action that may affect

other authorities, and consult where appropriate with the PR officers of those authorities.

For all these reasons, it is essential for the state/territory PR manager to be a member of any state/territory disaster task force set up for the emergency.

Within each state or territory, it is vital that the PR manager ensures that all PR and information dissemination (other than by the minister) is conducted through a single media spokesperson (see Section 5.1).

If necessary, the state/territory PR manager and their relief officers must be able to provide a PR service to the media on a rotating-shift, 24-hour basis.

5.3.4 Target groups

In a major incident, the high-level national communications group is responsible for identifying relevant target groups that need to be kept fully informed of disease outbreak developments. These groups include industry bodies (exporters, state/territory producer groups), industry service providers (stock and station agents, livestock transporters, saleyard operators, the Australian Veterinary Association), animal welfare organisations, other government departments, and show societies.

Requests for information from these groups when news of the emergency breaks should be anticipated so that quick responses can be provided.

It could also be useful to have on hand a contact list of reliable industry spokespersons whose names can be given to media looking for 'industry' comment. Before the media are referred to industry spokespersons, however, the spokespersons should be well briefed on the outbreak and especially on issues likely to be raised by the media.

Liaison with owners of affected properties is an important PR function. The owners will be under considerable stress, and will be helped by some advice on how to handle the media. This approach needs to be considerate and may involve industry liaison officers and other industry representatives.

5.3.5 Regular newsletter

In a protracted emergency, the publication of a regular newsletter for media and general distribution may be helpful. The publication should contain the latest information and be newsworthy, with timely, accurate and factual material.

5.4 The national PR manager

The role of the national PR manager will vary, depending on the extent and implications of the outbreak.

5.4.1 Outbreaks in only one state or territory

If an EAD outbreak is confined to one state or territory, Australian Government responsibility will be limited to those matters with national (interstate) or

international implications and to coordinating PR communication between the relevant state/territory PR manager and the CCEAD.

If the CCEAD agrees that an initial announcement should be made, the national PR manager will liaise with the state/territory PR manager to draft a media statement, finalise talking points and determine timing and strategies for release and distribution.

The national PR manager should also circulate to state/territory counterparts copies of all draft and final Australian Government or joint news releases, talking points and so on. They should also circulate draft and final state/territory releases to and from the CCEAD and to other states and territories.

5.4.2 Outbreaks in more than one state or territory

In an EAD outbreak that involves more than one state or territory, the division of responsibility for media and PR is as follows.

National media liaison

Nationally focused PR, including media liaison, should relate to the overall extent and effect of the emergency, especially the trade implications, and the areas of responsibility of jurisdictions and organisations. The national PR manager should also coordinate PR communications between the relevant state/territory PR managers, following NMG and CCEAD approval.

State/territory media liaison

State/territory PR, including media liaison, should be confined to matters that concern only the particular state or territory, especially stock and product movement restrictions, the extent of the disease, and eradication measures.

5.4.3 At the beginning of an EAD response

The initial priority for the national PR manager is to establish effective lines of communication with:

- the Australian CVO;
- other national agencies (such as the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, Food Standards Australia New Zealand and the Australian Animal Health Laboratory – AAHL) and their PR officers; and
- relevant state/territory PR managers via the NCN.

In an emergency, a high-level group drawn from the NCN will be formed to devise a communication strategy for NMG and CCEAD approval. The high-level group will also oversee the implementation of the approved strategy. This group will be chaired by DAFF, and membership will be drawn from relevant Australian Government agencies, agencies from the affected state or territory, and peak industry bodies impacted. Additional members at these times include the National Farmers' Federation, the Australian Food and Grocery Council and Animal Health Australia (see Figure 3).

The next priority for the national PR manager is to participate fully in all the decision-making and briefing processes (including initial and subsequent internal Critical Incident Task Force meetings and all CCEAD and NMG teleconferences). This participation is vital to ensure that the PR manager can be fully aware of the background to the emergency and the most up-to-date information, and advise on PR as necessary.

The national PR manager must ensure that all PR and information dissemination at the Australian Government level is coordinated through a single source, such as the federal minister and/or the Australian CVO or their designated representatives.

5.4.4 Coordination of PR activities with other agencies

The national public relations unit will be part of the functional committee structure reporting directly to the Critical Incident Task Force (see DAFF's *Critical Incident Response Plan*, which is accessible from the DAFF intranet).

As well as coordinating PR advice and activities within the internal Critical Incident Task Force structures, the national PR manager should coordinate the PR activities of the following Australian Government agencies.

Australian Animal Health Laboratory

During an EAD response, AAHL does not usually issue statements on the diagnostic work it is doing for the relevant CVO. Instead, it leaves comment on its work to the state or territory for which the tests are being performed. However, AAHL is a valuable source of technical and background information on EADs in general and can be used by state/territory PR managers as a reliable 'outside expert' to which the media can be referred.

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

The general manager of the DAFF Parliamentary and Media Branch will ensure that all quarantine and export inspection aspects of the emergency are considered in the light of other media and PR activities, and that a coordinated national PR effort is made. All media comment will be formulated in close consultation with the management of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The national PR manager should collaborate with the overseas information personnel of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to ensure that all media material that might reach overseas audiences is written simply, to minimise translation difficulties and the possibility of errors. DFAT media liaison will also need to be coordinated into the overall PR strategy by the national PR manager, working closely with DFAT PR staff.

Other Australian Government departments and agencies

The following Australian Government departments and agencies may also be involved:

- Prime Minister and Cabinet

- Health and Ageing (especially in the event of a disease with potential human health implications)
- Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
- Attorney-General
- Employment and Workplace Relations
- Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Centrelink
- Finance and Deregulation
- Resources, Energy and Tourism
- Treasury
- Innovation, Industry, Science and Research
- Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Local Government
- Emergency Management Australia (especially when national disaster provisions are activated)
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand.

6 Public relations policy and practice

6.1 News media policy

In an emergency animal disease (EAD) incident, the news media will require and expect an immediate and constant flow of timely and accurate information. Media demands can be expected to be large. Media assistance in an emergency will be invaluable.

The media's first responsibility is not to government authorities battling to contain an EAD outbreak. Their prime concern will be to produce newsworthy copy for their audiences. Recognising and accepting this will help public relations (PR) officers in their own roles.

Journalists usually have their own ideas about which information is suited to their particular audiences. PR officers involved in an EAD response should confine themselves to providing the facts promptly, and allow the media to decide how to present the story.

Most news media will cooperate with reasonable restrictions on where they may go and to whom they may speak during an emergency. At the earliest stage of an EAD outbreak, media should be sent a factsheet on the risks of media spreading the disease.⁵ All journalists should be provided with copies at media conferences, and the CVO or state/territory PR manager should brief all media on the risk of disease spread. Cooperation and mutual understanding are the key to dealing successfully with journalists, who will respond well if they are treated in a professional manner.

The PR approach during a response should be proactive, and flexibility is essential. With this in mind, the following policy should apply.

6.1.1 Don't play favourites with the media

Playing favourites will please one at the cost of getting many others offside. PR officers should be scrupulously fair in providing information and access.

6.1.2 Why it pays to be first

The national and state/territory PR managers may need to remind their departments and ministerial media advisers that, provided a reasonably certain diagnosis is to hand, it is always best to be proactive about what is happening – especially if the news is bad. Reticence or delay will allow misinformation to gain prominence in the media, and this could hinder containment and eradication efforts.

⁵ available at www.outbreak.gov.au

In the event of an EAD outbreak in several states, there is also a clear national responsibility to make a public announcement as soon as possible.

6.1.3 Handling interviews

Most interviews will be given by the media spokesperson (see Section 5.1). Sometimes, other senior officials or technical experts will be asked for an interview.

Officers giving interviews should:

- contact the relevant national or state/territory PR managers before committing to an interview;
- not agree to an interview unless they have been fully briefed with the latest information;
- agree, before consenting to an interview, on the areas to be covered – in an emergency, the media will be seeking a range of different angles;
- be wary of early-morning phone calls from journalists seeking views on any matter that might have occurred overnight or before the officer has heard the details – if the officer is not aware of the situation, they should offer to ring back later;
- resist the temptation to give an off-the-cuff reply, or information they are not completely sure of – if the officer does not know the answer to a question, they should say so and offer to get the information promptly;
- politely but assuredly correct any statements made by the journalist that they do not agree with;
- feel free to answer a question with either ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ – the officer need not always elaborate;
- politely and firmly give the reasons for not answering particular questions – there is no obligation to answer all questions;
- remember that journalists work to deadlines, ask what those deadlines are, and ensure that required information reaches the journalist before then;
- return phone calls promptly to avoid the publication of an inaccurate or incomplete story;
- offer to supply, without delay, any information not immediately available; and
- offer to check the facts with the reporter at the end of the interview, but not expect any editorial influence over the story once it is completed – the media will not accept censorship of their material.

There is no requirement during an interview to provide only passive answers or to go only where the interviewer leads. Up to a point, the officer being interviewed can influence the direction and volunteer information that they want to get across.

The officer should present the main points and conclusions first. This introduces the journalist to the ideas that the officer wants to put forward, and helps the journalist to frame questions. The officer should avoid jargon, explain difficult terminology and refrain from using emotionally laden words like ‘crisis’ or ‘breakthrough’, as these invite sensationalism.

Information should never be released on the basis of an agreement that it is 'off the record'. All conversations with journalists should be treated as being on the record.

If interviewed for television or radio, the officer should be brief, delivering the message in short, clear bursts of not more than 10–15 seconds. A statement for the broadcast media should be concise but still contain the main information.

6.1.4 Making the best use of television

Before a television interview, the officer being interviewed should mentally compose two or three main points. During the interview, questions can be 'turned around' to make those points. Questions do not always have to be taken literally; they are really invitations to comment.

The officer should:

- appear composed and relaxed, with hands calm;
- maintain eye contact with the interviewer and not look at the camera (as this will seem artificial);
- take time to 'psych up' and formulate their responses;
- avoid bumping the table or touching the microphones;
- speak up, sound 'alive' and act slightly 'larger than life' to get the message across;
- refrain from using notes – it gives a poor impression, and microphones pick up the rustling;
- never lose their temper or become argumentative;
- try to keep replies short and punchy; and
- remember the KISS principle – Keep It Short and Simple.

Television crews may only film the 'state-of-play' charts in the state or territory disease control headquarters (SDCHQ) or local disease control centre (LDCC) with controller/director approval and then only after the charts/displays have been checked to the same extent as a media release. If this is not possible, they should be given a simplified and visually attractive colour equivalent copy that shows the main points and will meet their requirements for inclusion in a story.

6.1.5 Using radio to advantage

An officer being interviewed for radio should:

- work out in advance what they want to say and not get bogged down in too much detail;
- try to relax – people who are nervous often start talking too quickly and pitch their voices higher than usual;
- begin the interview by deliberately pitching their voice a little lower than usual;
- speak slowly and clearly;
- offer no more than is required by a question;

- not allow their voice to taper off at the end of sentences;
- avoid speaking in a boring, low-key, careful, circumspect manner;
- respond firmly under pressure;
- not give long, complex answers;
- simplify complex matters; and
- explain the meaning of any specialised word, or any word used in a specialised sense.

6.1.6 Electronic eavesdropping by news media

Most metropolitan news media use electronic scanners to monitor emergency broadcast bands – including police, ambulance and fire service radio communications – in order to pick up newsworthy items.

They are likely to use this facility in the event of an EAD outbreak.

SDCHQ and LDCC staff using emergency frequencies should be aware that their communications could be monitored.

6.1.7 Identification cards for the media

Reporters and other media personnel should be asked to wear their own accredited identification while covering the outbreak.

6.2 Media releases and handouts

6.2.1 Releases by the Australian or state/territory chief veterinary officer

Although the media spokesperson – who may or may not be the chief veterinary officer (CVO; see Section 5.1) – will be the main human face of the EAD response, a media release or news conference involving the CVO can give an air of authority and calm to the PR effort. While media speculation can cause panic or unnecessary anxiety in the community, on-the-record interviews with CVOs can counter this by providing facts about the nature, extent, cause, effects and consequences of the emergency.

CVOs can also speak authoritatively on the methods and overall procedures involved in the response, and of intended or possible further actions by the coordinating authority.

6.2.2 Releases by state/territory PR managers and local PR officers

PR managers and officers may only release information authorised by the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), or by their CVO or the CVO's delegate.

PR staff should not comment on any matter that touches on the activities or responsibilities of any organisation other than their own. They should deal only with confirmed facts and not express opinions.

6.3 State/territory news conferences

Issuing a news release will, in most cases, satisfy the print media's need for information. However, television and radio will require interviews. A major development will make it necessary to call a news conference.

News conferences can be a useful tool in reaching large numbers of media outlets at the same time. They have the added advantage of allowing the media spokesperson, the minister, the CVO and/or technical experts to present the facts and answer questions. CVOs and experts can then return to the emergency at hand.

Once the SDCHQ is activated and CCEAD has approved the issue of an initial media release, the state/territory PR manager should liaise with the relevant state/territory ministerial media adviser about calling an initial news conference and about who should be available for interview.

Should the situation warrant it and as circumstances dictate, further regular news conferences may be called. In serious outbreaks, it could be an advantage for the media and the PR manager if these were held once or twice each day at set times (for example, just after one of the major situation updates in the LDCC).

Unless special circumstances dictate otherwise, a news conference should not be called after 3 pm, which is close to the deadline for morning newspapers and evening television bulletins. Mid-morning or early afternoon is best, but timing will ultimately depend on the nature of the information to be issued and perhaps on the availability of the spokesperson.

The media should be notified (by phone and through the parliamentary press gallery) of the time, place and subject matter of the news conference. There is no need for detail: one or two paragraphs on a 'NEWS ALERT' letterhead will be adequate. A minimum of one hour's notice is desirable, with shorter notice only as a last resort.

As the media arrive, they should be given a written statement in the form of a news release cleared by the minister and/or the CVO. Allowing up to 10 minutes for late arrivals will give those present time to digest the information in the release.

The PR officer should introduce the spokesperson and state how long the opening statement will take and how much time will be allowed for questions. The limit on time for questions should be enforced.

Television news crews and, to a lesser extent, radio journalists, will want separate interviews with the spokesperson after the conference. Print journalists may want to stay behind to pose more probing questions. If the spokesperson's time is limited, the media should be warned at the beginning of the news conference that there will be no time for separate interviews afterwards, and that they should ask all necessary questions in the time allowed.

The spokesperson should make a brief statement elaborating on the news release, and then call for questions.

Materials that could usefully be handed out include broadcast quality video footage, still images, factsheets, background information, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and explanations of emergency acronyms.

6.4 Media requests to enter infected premises or dangerous contact premises

State/territory and Australian Government authorities do not usually divulge the names or addresses of infected premises (IPs), dangerous contact premises (DCPs) or any other premises during an EAD outbreak. The news media, however, have difficulty accepting such a policy and will persist until they have this information from other sources. There may be justification on legal grounds for refusing to deny or confirm the name or location of an IP or DCP.

Entry by media to an IP or DCP must be approved by the CVO and the property owner. Three options for dealing with media requests for entry are described briefly below.

Option 1: Deny access

Given quarantine restrictions and the probability that the owner of an IP or DCP will not welcome publicity, denial of access will be the most likely initial response.

The problem will be how to make this palatable to the media. A refusal would be more acceptable if the media were offered access to high-quality footage. Arrangements with the ABC and for still photographers exist for this purpose (see Section 5.3.3). In addition, the ABC will distribute pooled footage to domestic and international television networks and stations. For the still photographer, a shell contract has been drawn up and is stored at the crisis-ready extranet site maintained by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). This contract spells out how many photos are required each day, the format and where they are to be sent. In the event of a major pest or disease emergency, the ABC and a local photographer (to be identified as needed) will be given access to IPs to obtain pooled vision for both domestic and international television and print media purposes.

Option 2: Restricted access

If the media know the location of an IP or DCP (with or without the cooperation of the CVO), they will insist on visiting it. They may or may not seek permission from the CVO. Attempts to restrict the media's activities will quickly arouse hostility, with resulting negative – and possibly damaging – coverage. If possible, it is preferable to permit the visit, with restrictions determined by the CVO according to the circumstances.

If a visit is authorised, other media outlets will expect the same privilege.

Any authorised visit should be supervised. The state/territory PR manager must ensure that any special conditions laid down by the CVO are accepted by journalists as a condition of entry to the IP or DCP, and are complied with. For example, those entering the IP may be required to wear special clothing and footwear, or to cover and disinfect equipment.

The PR manager should warn the CVO that the media will want interviews, and these should be arranged if possible.

The media should be assembled at a point outside the IP or DCP boundary, where restrictions imposed for the inspection should be repeated. Agreement to those conditions should be sought again, to avoid any misunderstanding about the ground rules.

A PR officer should escort the media representatives onto the IP or DCP as a group. They should be allowed enough time to video or record interviews. Setting up and recording action on video at each location will take at least 15 minutes.

Option 3: Media pooling

'Pooling' is the practice by which one representative from each of press, radio and television agrees to cover an event for all other representatives of that medium. The results are then shared among media who did not attend. The advantage of pooling is that the authorities need deal only with a maximum of five or six media representatives.

The state/territory PR manager must ensure that all media understand the arrangement and agree to it. Should one outlet not agree (which is unlikely), it must be explained to them that they will not receive special treatment. In other words, they must accept the pool coverage or receive nothing.

The press secretary to the responsible minister should be advised of the pooling arrangement. If broadcast and print media agree to form a pool, their representatives will consist of one newspaper reporter and a photographer, one radio reporter, one television reporter and a camera person, and possibly a sound recordist.

The pool group should be escorted during its visit to the IP or DCP, and should observe any special conditions stipulated by the CVO.

National arrangements are in place with the ABC to provide pooled television footage to the media.

6.4.1 Media helicopters

Most news media (especially television) own, charter or otherwise have access to helicopters. This can pose problems for the EAD response because some disease is spread by airborne means.

State/territory PR managers should assume that helicopters will be used either to ferry journalists to the site of an outbreak or, more commonly, to fly over the site to gather aerial shots. The likelihood of media flights occurring should be notified to the director or controller of the control centre, who may consider having a restricted airspace declared in the restricted area.

If restrictions are to apply, Australian Government assistance in declaring a restricted airspace in the vicinity of the IP should be sought, and then the media should be informed immediately.

Reasons for the restrictions should be given, such as the possible dispersal of the disease agent, the possibility that panicked stock will make control measures more difficult, and possible danger to helicopters from firearms.

6.4.2 Media access to laboratories

All media inquiries about laboratories should be referred to the state/territory PR manager, who will liaise with the appropriate laboratory contact and who will formulate an appropriate response in consultation with the CVO.

Options for dealing with media access to laboratories are as follows.

Option 1: Deny access

Denial of access should be an option of last resort, to be used in cases where there is a risk of spreading the disease.

Option 2: Restricted access

Where practicable, the state/territory PR manager could arrange supervised visits by the media to get background television shots or press photos, or to provide background information on testing techniques.

All visits should be supervised by the state/territory PR manager or their representative, in conjunction with the laboratory director.

6.5 Dealing with misinformation

Published information, no matter how inaccurate, tends to become a matter of public record, and thus self-perpetuating. Every opportunity must be taken to correct mis-statements. Media officers will need to monitor closely all media output to ensure unbiased, informed and accurate reporting of the event.

To correct misinformation, the journalist or organisation concerned, if known, should be telephoned and asked to restate the facts. This should be followed up immediately with a written statement of the true position, to be copied to the CVO. If the incorrect information has been picked up and used by other media, a general news release correcting the facts should be issued.

6.6 Managing criticism

There will be some critics of the handling of any emergency. These guidelines should not be interpreted as an attempt to stifle genuine, constructive criticism, but unwarranted and inaccurate criticism must be dealt with promptly.

Sometimes, a response to criticism will worsen the situation, and silence is a better option. If a response is made, critics must not be allowed to focus only on an isolated feature of the emergency.

It may be necessary to provide misinformed critics with a personal briefing.

Local groups likely to become involved, such as animal welfare groups and local government, should be identified and targeted, and group briefings arranged.

Malicious criticism is quite different and should be treated as such. Almost invariably, it calls into question the ability or credibility of those involved in the EAD response. An effective means of dealing with this is to arrange for independent, knowledgeable sources to publicly counter the criticism.

6.7 Follow-up — for the record

When all the immediate priorities are met, the state/territory PR manager, in conjunction with the CVO, could arrange for file videos and photographs of the outbreak to be collected as a part of the historical record and also as resource material for future general PR, farmer extension and veterinary officer training purposes.

Appendix 1 Disease control centre structures

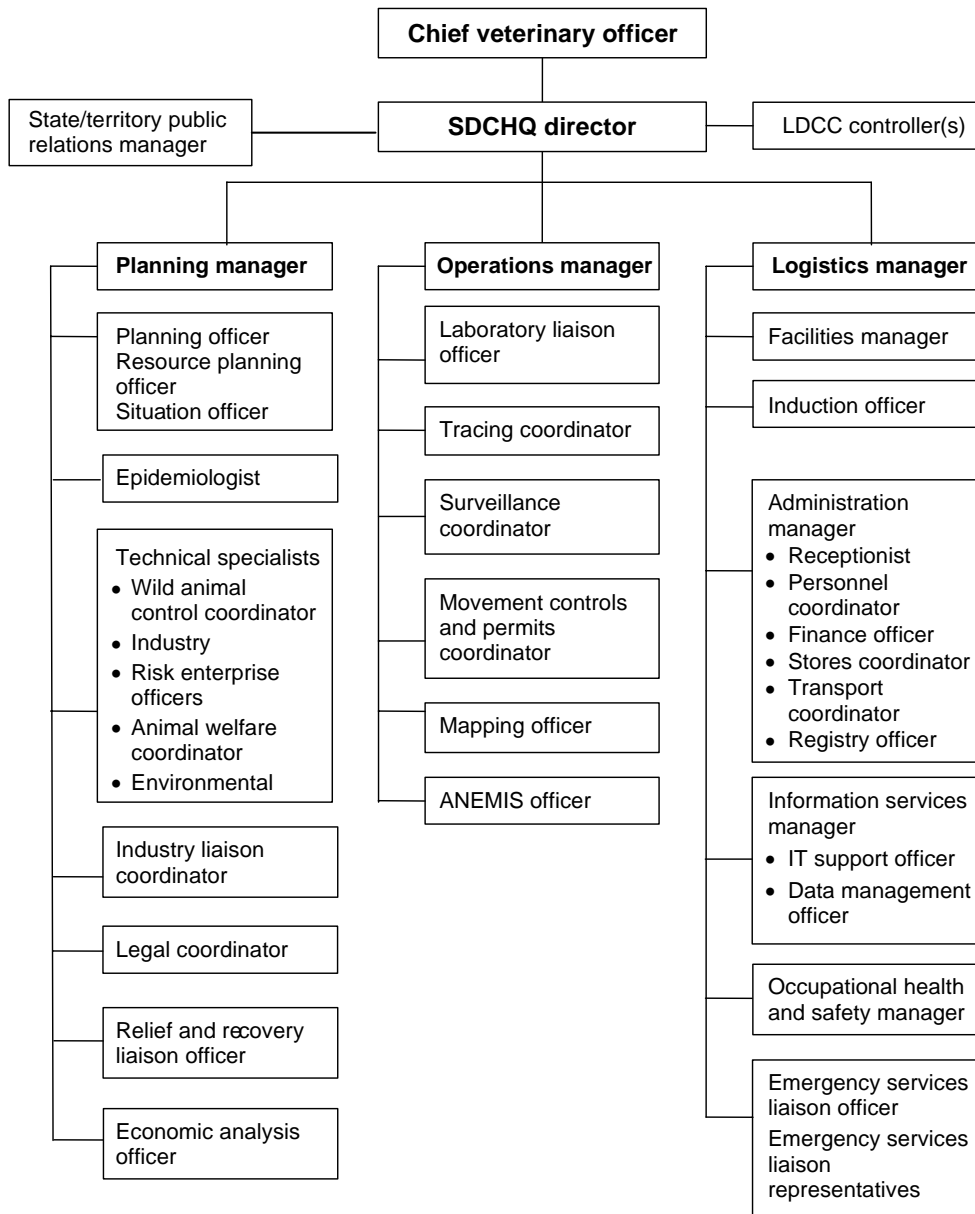
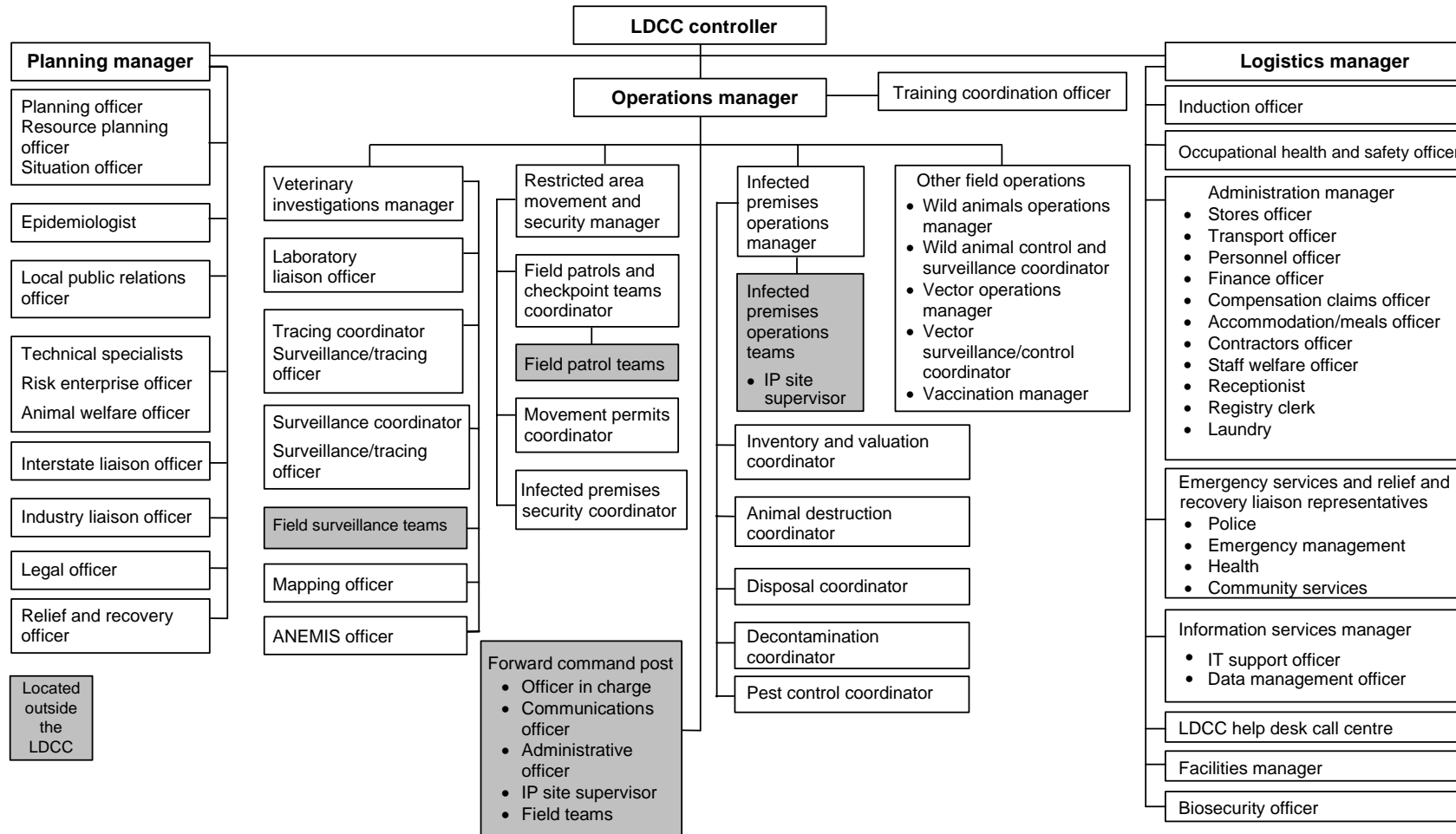


Figure A1.1 Organisational structure of a state disease control headquarters (SDCHQ)



Note: This diagram does not include administrative or clerical support positions. While the structure is hierarchical, informal communication must occur across the centre for efficiency and effectiveness.

Figure A1.2 Organisational structure of a local disease control centre (LDCC) [

Glossary

Animal byproducts	Products of animal origin that are not for consumption but are destined for industrial use (eg hides and skins, fur, wool, hair, feathers, hooves, bones, fertiliser).
Animal Health Committee	A committee comprising the CVOs of Australia and New Zealand, Australian state and territory CVOs, Animal Health Australia, and a CSIRO representative. The committee provides advice to PIMC on animal health matters, focusing on technical issues and regulatory policy (formerly called the Veterinary Committee). <i>See also</i> Primary Industries Ministerial Council
Animal products	Meat, meat products and other products of animal origin (eg eggs, milk) for human consumption or for use in animal feedstuff.
Australian Chief Veterinary Officer	The nominated senior veterinarian in the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry who manages international animal health commitments and the Australian Government's response to an animal disease outbreak. <i>See also</i> Chief veterinary officer
AUSVETPLAN	<i>Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan</i> . A series of technical response plans that describe the proposed Australian approach to an emergency animal disease incident. The documents provide guidance based on sound analysis, linking policy, strategies, implementation, coordination and emergency-management plans.
Betacam video	The professional quality video format used by television crews and stations.
Chief veterinary officer (CVO)	The senior veterinarian of the animal health authority in each jurisdiction (national, state or territory) who has responsibility for animal disease control in that jurisdiction. <i>See also</i> Australian Chief Veterinary Officer
Compensation	The sum of money paid by government to an owner for stock that is destroyed and property that is compulsorily destroyed because of an emergency animal disease. <i>See also</i> Cost-sharing arrangements, Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement

Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD)	A committee of state and territory CVOs, representatives of CSIRO Livestock Industries and the relevant industries, and chaired by the Australian CVO. CCEAD convenes and consults when there is an animal disease emergency due to the introduction of an emergency animal disease of livestock, or other serious epizootic of Australian origin.
Control area	A declared area in which the conditions applying are of lesser intensity than those in a restricted area (the limits of a control area and the conditions applying to it can be varied during an outbreak according to need).
Cost-sharing arrangements	Arrangements agreed between governments (national and states/territories) and livestock industries for sharing the costs of emergency animal disease responses. <i>See also</i> Compensation, Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement
Dangerous contact animal	A susceptible animal that has been designated as being exposed to other infected animals or potentially infectious products following tracing and epidemiological investigation.
Dangerous contact premises	Premises that contain dangerous contact animals or other serious contacts.
Declared area	A defined tract of land that is subjected to disease control restrictions under emergency animal disease legislation. Types of declared areas include <i>restricted area, control area, infected premises, dangerous contact premises</i> and <i>suspect premises</i> .
Decontamination	Includes all stages of cleaning and disinfection.
Destroy (animals)	To slaughter animals humanely.
Disease agent	A general term for a transmissible organism or other factor that causes an infectious disease.
Disinfectant	A chemical used to destroy disease agents outside a living animal.
Disinfection	The application, after thorough cleansing, of procedures intended to destroy the infectious or parasitic agents of animal diseases, including zoonoses; applies to premises, vehicles and different objects that may have been directly or indirectly contaminated.
Disposal	Sanitary removal of animal carcasses, animal products, materials and wastes by burial, burning or some other process so as to prevent the spread of disease.

Emergency animal disease	A disease that is (a) exotic to Australia or (b) a variant of an endemic disease or (c) a serious infectious disease of unknown or uncertain cause or (d) a severe outbreak of a known endemic disease, and that is considered to be of national significance with serious social or trade implications. <i>See also</i> Endemic animal disease, Exotic animal disease
Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement	Agreement between the Australian and state/territory governments and livestock industries on the management of emergency animal disease responses. Provisions include funding mechanisms, the use of appropriately trained personnel and existing standards, such as AUSVETPLAN. <i>See also</i> Compensation, Cost-sharing arrangements
Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline	24-hour freecall service for reporting suspected incidences of exotic diseases – 1800 675 888 .
Endemic animal disease	A disease affecting animals (which may include humans) that is known to occur in Australia. <i>See also</i> Emergency animal disease, Exotic animal disease
Enterprise	<i>See</i> Risk enterprise
Epidemiological investigation	An investigation to identify and qualify the risk factors associated with the disease.
Exotic animal disease	A disease affecting animals (which may include humans) that does not normally occur in Australia. <i>See also</i> Emergency animal disease, Endemic animal disease
Exotic fauna/feral animals	<i>See</i> Wild animals
In-contact animals	Animals that have had close contact with infected animals, such as non-infected animals in the same group as infected animals.
Infected premises (IP)	A defined area (which may be all or part of a property) in which an emergency disease exists, is believed to exist, or in which the infective agent of that emergency disease exists or is believed to exist. An infected premises is subject to quarantine served by notice and to eradication or control procedures.
Local disease control centre (LDCC)	An emergency operations centre responsible for the command and control of field operations in a defined area.
Movement control	Restrictions placed on the movement of animals, people and other things to prevent the spread of disease.
National coordination centre	A centre established by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to provide national leadership and coordination in response to an emergency animal disease.

National management group (NMG)	A group established to direct and coordinate an animal disease emergency. NMGs may include the chief executive officers of the Australian Government and state or territory governments where the emergency occurs, industry representatives, the Australian CVO (and chief medical officer, if applicable) and the chair of Animal Health Australia.
OIE Terrestrial Code	<i>OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code</i> . Reviewed annually at the OIE meeting in May and published on the internet at: http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/a_summry.htm
OIE Terrestrial Manual	<i>OIE Manual of Standards for Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals</i> . Describes standards for laboratory diagnostic tests and the production and control of biological products (principally vaccines). The current edition is published on the internet at: http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mmanual/a_summry.htm
Operational procedures	Detailed instructions for carrying out specific disease control activities, such as disposal, destruction, decontamination and valuation.
Owner	Person responsible for a premises (includes an agent of the owner, such as a manager or other controlling officer).
Premises	A tract of land including its buildings, or a separate farm or facility that is maintained by a single set of services and personnel.
Primary Industries Ministerial Council	The council of Australian national, state and territory and New Zealand ministers of agriculture that sets Australian and New Zealand agricultural policy (formerly the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand). <i>See also</i> Animal Health Committee
Public relations	The deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.
Quarantine	Legal restrictions imposed on a place or a tract of land by the serving of a notice limiting access or egress of specified animals, persons or things.
Restricted area	A relatively small declared area (compared with a control area) around an infected premises that is subject to intense surveillance and movement controls.

Risk enterprise	A defined livestock or related enterprise, which is potentially a major source of infection for many other premises. Includes intensive piggeries, feedlots, abattoirs, knackeries, saleyards, calf scales, milk factories, tanneries, skin sheds, game meat establishments, cold stores, artificial insemination centres, veterinary laboratories and hospitals, road and rail freight depots, showgrounds, field days, weighbridges, garbage depots.
Role description	Statement of functions of a position within the overall operation.
Sentinel animal	Animal of known health status that is monitored to detect the presence of a specific disease agent.
Spell	To keep unused for a period of time until there is no risk of disease agent remaining.
Stages of activation and deactivation:	
– investigation phase	when a report of a possible emergency disease is being investigated by animal health authorities;
– alert phase	when there is a high probability that an emergency disease is present or one is confirmed in another state;
– operational phase	when the CVO determines that an animal disease emergency exists in the state, and operations to contain, control or eradicate the disease are implemented;
– stand-down phase	when the CVO determines that an animal disease emergency no longer exists.
Stamping out	Disease eradication strategy based on the quarantine and slaughter of all susceptible animals that are infected or exposed to the disease.
State or territory disease control headquarters	The emergency operations centre that directs the disease control operations to be undertaken in that state or territory.
Surveillance	A systematic program of investigation designed to establish the presence, extent of, or absence of a disease, or of infection or contamination with the causative organism. It includes the examination of animals for clinical signs, antibodies or the causative organism.
Susceptible animals	Animals that can be infected with a particular disease.
Suspect premises	Temporary classification of premises containing suspect animals. After rapid resolution of the status of the suspect animal(s) contained on it, a suspect premises is reclassified either as an infected premises (and appropriate disease-control measures taken) or as free from disease.

Tracing	The process of locating animals, persons or other items that may be implicated in the spread of disease, so that appropriate action can be taken.
Vaccination	Inoculation of healthy individuals with weakened or attenuated strains of disease-causing agents to provide protection from disease.
Vector	A living organism (frequently an arthropod) that transmits an infectious agent from one host to another. A <i>biological</i> vector is one in which the infectious agent must develop or multiply before becoming infective to a recipient host. A <i>mechanical</i> vector is one that transmits an infectious agent from one host to another but is not essential to the life cycle of the agent.
Wild animals	
- native wildlife	Animals that are indigenous to Australia and may be susceptible to emergency animal diseases (eg bats, dingoes, marsupials).
- feral animals	Domestic animals that have become wild (eg cats, horses, pigs).
- exotic fauna	Nondomestic animal species that are not indigenous to Australia (eg foxes).
Zoning	The process of defining disease-free and infected areas in accord with OIE guidelines, based on geopolitical boundaries and surveillance, in order to facilitate trade.

Abbreviations

AAHL	Australian Animal Health Laboratory
ACVO	Australian Chief Veterinary Officer
AUSVETPLAN	Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan
CCEAD	Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CVO	chief veterinary officer
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Australian Government)
DCP	dangerous contact premises
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australian Government)
EAD	emergency animal disease
FAQ	frequently asked question
FVO	field veterinary officer
IP	infected premises
LDCC	local disease control centre
NCC	national coordination centre
NCN	National Communications Network
NMG	national management group
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health (formerly Office International des Epizooties)
PR	public relations
SDCHQ	state or territory disease control headquarters
SVO	senior veterinary officer

Index

- abbreviations, 55
- alert phase of EAD responses, 15, 16
- AUSVETPLAN
 - description, 9–10
 - disease summaries, 13
 - purpose, 13
- control centre structures
 - LDCC, 48
 - SDCHQ, 47
- core principles of public relations, 12
- criticism, dealing with, 45–46
- disease summaries, 13
- EAD responses
 - alert phase, 15, 16
 - follow-up, 46
 - importance of public relations, 10–11
 - legislation, 10
 - likely costs, 9
 - national arrangements, 20–25
 - National Communications Network, 21–25
 - national policy and strategy, 20–21
 - phases, 14–19
 - preparations, 14
 - public relations activities during responses, 26–37
 - stand-down phase, 19
- eavesdropping, 41
- glossary of terms, 49
- helicopters, 44–45
- identification cards for media, 41
- infected premises, requests to enter, 43–45
- interviews
 - general advice, 39–40
 - radio, 40–41
 - television, 40
- laboratories, requests to visit, 45
- legislation, 10
- local disease control centre, structure, 48
- local PR officer
 - immediate priorities in EAD response, 27–28
 - on arrival at LDCC, 28–29
 - PR priorities, proactive, 29–30
 - role during EAD response, 26–32
- media conferences. *See* news conferences
- media helicopters, 44–45
- media pooling, 44
- media releases and handouts
 - by chief veterinary officers, 41
 - by state/territory PR managers and local PR officers, 41
- media spokespersons, 26
- national arrangements for EAD responses, 20–25
- National Communications Network, 21–25
- national policy and strategy, 20–21
- national PR manager
 - coordination with other agencies, 36–37
 - immediate priorities, 35–36
 - role during EAD response, 34–37
 - role in multistate outbreaks, 35
 - role in single-state outbreaks, 34–35
- news conferences, 42–43
- phases of EAD responses, 14–19
- preparations for EAD responses, 14
- press releases. *See* media releases and handouts
- public relations
 - activities during EAD responses, 26–37
 - core principles, 12
 - media spokespersons, 26
 - policy and practice overview, 38–41
 - purpose of AUSVETPLAN, 13
 - radio interviews, 40–41
 - requests for access to laboratories, 45
 - requests to enter infected premises, 43–45
 - roles of personnel
 - local PR officer, 26–32
 - media spokespersons, 26
 - national PR manager, 34–37
 - state/territory PR manager, 32–34
 - spokespersons, 26
 - stand-down phase of EAD responses, 19
 - state disease control headquarters, structure, 47
 - state/territory PR manager

immediate priorities, 33–34
role during EAD response, 32–34
role in multistate outbreaks, 33
role in single-state outbreaks, 33

target groups, 34
use of regular circulars, 34
television interviews, 40