



## **Transition Plan for industry: From the current July 2011 OAP to the new framework and Codes of Practice**

### **Background**

MAF is currently working to harmonise export requirements and to streamline its internal processes in order to better facilitate the export process.

Following the amalgamation of the Animal Products sector back into MAF, work has taken place to allow the integration of live animals and germplasm into the harmonised export programmes for Animal Products.

One of the first key changes was to amend the relevant four legal notices that underpin the export sector, so that the live animal and germplasm Official Assurance Programme could be incorporated into the same framework.

As the Animal Exports team who manage the live animal and germplasm Official Assurance Programme have limited resources, the changes to the programme are to be done in stages, with the transition plan used to manage the various transition stages.

A summary of the key steps that are planned to occur as the Official Assurance Programme for live animals and germplasm transitions into working under the amended legal notices includes:

- The Animal Products notices amended to include live animals and germplasm from the 28 Nov 2011
- *Official Assurance Programme: Requirements for Export of Live Animals and Germplasm* amended to a new version and issued 28 Nov 2011 to implement the most significant changes
- Recognised Agency and Recognised Person approvals and functions alignment with other export sectors from 28 Nov 2011
- Approvals and country listings of germplasm and poultry premises will transition to the MAF Approvals Group during 2012, with fees introduced under the cost recovery Regulations
- *Official Assurance Programme: Requirements for Export of Live Animals and Germplasm* replaced by Codes of Practice or Guidelines by June 2012
- Keeping industry stakeholders aware of the changes by providing a Transition Plan
- Updating the MAF website as required.

## What is happening

Due to perceived gaps or potential issues with what 'rules' apply as the OAP is changed to CoPs, there are some main areas of work required:

- as an interim measure, parts of the Official Assurance Programme (OAP) document have been amended to coincide with when the legal notices are issued, effectively allowing some changes to happen immediately
- Aligning the germplasm and poultry premises approvals to the MAF Approvals Group system, with the approvals and country listings migrating to the responsibility of the MAF Approvals Group by 1 March 2012
- Working with industry to develop Codes of Practice or Guidelines to cover four topics: General, Germplasm, Poultry, and Pre-export Isolation
- Follow-on issues will include looking to reviewing OMAR's to align to the revised export programme after June 2012.

The OAP has been amended at the same time as the legal notices are issued, as some parts of the OAP are now redundant (parts 3, 4, 11 and parts of 5), and there will need to be something in place to manage the change over to the new system eg semen centre approvals will no longer be 6 monthly, so the OAP will need to be amended to show this to avoid confusion.

The OAP 28 Nov 2011 version has the redundant Parts removed, and where clauses are redundant or amended the changes are shown by using strikethrough to show any wording that no longer applies, and the section highlighted in yellow so that it is easy to see that a change has taken place.

### 1. Change in recognitions for AQ

There will be some significant changes in the recognitions for AsureQuality as a Recognised Agency and the Recognised Persons under the new Notices.

Some of the key changes to the Recognised Agency functions and recognitions include:

- a. AQ RP's will now only have one generic function – verifying export requirements and official assurances for the export of live animals and germplasm
- b. RP's do not necessarily need to be veterinarians, but they will need to have industry knowledge and meet any market access requirements for activities or supervision required to be done by an official veterinarian
- c. AQ won't need to send audit reports and veterinarian approvals to MAF, as the continued listing of premises will no longer depend on an evaluation of the audit report by MAF, but to keep the register up to date any changes to veterinarian approvals should be notified to MAF Animal Exports
- d. New export approved premises will need to be audited to gain approval, with the operator responsible for sending their application and a copy of the AQ audit report to MAF.

## 2. Amendment of the OAP

The OAP has been amended and a new 28 November 2011 version issued with the following changes:

- removed Parts 3, 4, and 11 and some forms
- removed some of Part 5 by strikethrough, leaving useful information still in place that is not covered by the *Animal Products (Official Assurances Specifications) Notice 2011*
- amended key parts altered by the new notices
- additional information included to explain key details.

During the transition phases, issues may arise where former requirements are no longer specified in a legal notice, and so the status of those requirements may be unclear.

Some key changes include:

- a. changes in terminology so that what happens in the live animal and germplasm sector matches the other export sectors
- b. the MAFBNZ Conflict of Interest policy no longer applies – the reference document is now the Veterinary Council ‘*Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinarians*’
- c. record keeping requirements in most cases change from seven to four years
- d. verification of germplasm and poultry declarations become 5% rather than the previous 10%
- e. audits for ‘re-approval’ have changed, with audit frequency now based on the verification notice: *Animal Products (Export Verification Requirements) Notice 2011*
- f. AQ has the ability to set the scope of the audits to be less prescriptive, or to carry out extra audits if critical non-compliances are identified outside of audit activities
- g. there is an emphasis on AQ managing the audits and only being required to notify MAF of any critical non-compliances
- h. export approved premises are responsible for making sure that any market access requirements for audit or inspection are complied with, as that may be different to what is now required in the OAP i.e. some markets may require 6 monthly audits
- i. the Animal Products sector manages initial approval audits differently to re-approval audits, so the requirements in the *Animal Products (Export Approved Premises) Notice 2011* clause 6 need to be complied with, with the application and audit report sent to MAF Animal Exports team until the MAF Approvals Group take over the approvals

- j. MAF Animal Exports will maintain the germplasm and hatchery register online, but will only require notification if there are any significant changes in details, or if there are changes in approved veterinarians
- k. Replacement approval letters will be sent to all export approved premises by mid-January 2012 to replace their current letter (which has an expiry date)
- l. Pre-export isolation is no longer considered a formal MAF approval, with the option for continuously approved PEI's to be changed in the future – as there is no legal notice backing PEI approvals, they become a market access requirement requiring an RP to approve them as part of the OMAR for the country being exported to.

The overall approach to the OAP standard is that the legal requirements may be either

- different (OAP section deleted by strikethrough and referral to Animal Products legal notice)
- or less prescriptive (OAP left as it is, but 'must' is not necessarily applicable).

Where the OAP is not amended, compliance to the OAP will ensure compliance to the requirements for the NZ standard for export of live animals and germplasm.

The industry is now requested to abide by the 28 November 2011 version of the *Official Assurance Programme: Requirements for Export of Live Animals and Germplasm* until it is replaced by the Codes of Practice or Guidelines.

Where a gap is identified that has the potential to put exports at risk, the Animal Exports team will prioritise the work to manage the issue, with a focus on facilitating exports to continue.

Where issues are identified that are not significant, the issue will be recorded and assigned a priority and target date. It is anticipated that some issues may be target dated for after June 2012.

### **3. Development of the Codes or Practice (or Guidelines)**

- four CoPs to be developed: general, germplasm, poultry, PEIs
- MAF Animal Exports and representatives from the industry will work jointly on these
- there will be consultation rounds, reviews of submissions, etc.
- stakeholder workshops to be held once they are due to be issued.

### **4. Review of approvals**

- premises listings will eventually move from one year to two yearly
- there will be harmonisation of premises approvals until the changeover to the MAF Approvals Group (online submission) is available
- there will be changes to the approvals listings – template letters, website spreadsheets, removal of expiry dates etc
- charging for approvals under the cost recovery Regulations will be phased in

- there is still some internal discussion within MAF over the approval of centre/team/poultry vets, so in the meantime these will be managed by AQ with notification of change to MAF Animal Exports.

## 5. Timetable

Transition timetable	Date
Transition plan developed and sent to industry	28 Nov 2011
Amended Animal Products notices to be gazetted	28 Nov 2011
OAP amended	28 Nov 2011
Approvals and country listings of germplasm and poultry premises will transition to the MAF Approvals Group	By 1 Mar 2012
Workshop to discuss changes to new Codes of Practice/Guidelines	By May 2012
OAP replaced by Codes of Practice or Guidelines	By June 2012