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Jennifer Davis
Principal Veterinary Office A/g
Department of Agriculture
Canberra ACT 2601

By email only: OIEAustralia@agriculture.gov.au.

Dear Ms Davis,

Regarding OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code chapters proposed for adoption in May 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the chapters of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Code proposed for adoption at the May 2020 meeting.

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA) is the peak industry association representing the registrant and approval holders of veterinary medicines and animal health products in Australia. One of our core functions is to advocate, educate and promote animal health and welfare.

AMA would particularly like to note its support of the draft new chapter on animal welfare and laying hen production systems (Annex 12, draft Chapter 7.Z):

- **Painful procedures:** painful procedures should not be practiced unless necessary and should be performed in such a way as to minimise pain, distress and suffering.
- **Animal health management, preventive medicine and veterinary treatment:** close engagement with veterinarians is essential to protect and promote animal health and welfare, and vaccinations and other treatments should be administered by those who are skilled in the procedure and with due consideration for the welfare of the animal.
- **Biosecurity plans:** biosecurity practices are critical to protect animal welfare by preventing animal distress and suffering caused by the transmission of infection or infestation.

AMA would also like to suggest that the importance of protection of hens from feral animals is mentioned in this chapter. The risks of predation of hens are already noted, but protection from feral species is also important from a biosecurity perspective, given that feral animals are known vectors and reservoirs for many animal diseases.

A pertinent example in pig production is the current threat from African Swine Fever (ASF). If ASF was detected in Australia's farmed pig population, rapid and strict biosecurity and veterinary management could likely control its spread, albeit with considerable stock losses. However, if ASF was detected in Australia's uncontrolled feral pig population, future control and eradication of this debilitating disease would likely be impossible.

AMA supports the ongoing work of the Australian delegation to OIE to improve and protect the health and welfare of all animals, and we look forward to ongoing engagement with the delegation on these important topics.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Charmian Bennett

Science and Technical Manager