

## Practical exercise on the establishment and self-declaration to the OIE of an Equine Disease Free Zone (EDFZ)

### Background

An EDFZ is a part of a country, defined by the Veterinary Authority, containing an animal population or subpopulation with a specific animal health status with respect to specified equine diseases. Establishing an EDFZ can be considered to allow international horse sports competitions to take place in countries which have not yet been able to control or eradicate the specified equine diseases in their entire territory.

An EDFZ can be declared to the OIE free from the specified equine diseases through a self-declaration, under the responsibility of the OIE Delegate.

Guidance documents on the establishment of an EDFZ and its self-declaration to the OIE (Standard Operating Procedure) ) and other tools to facilitate the international movement of competition horses are available on the OIE Website:

- <https://www.oie.int/en/what-we-offer/safe-trade-and-movement-of-animals/international-competition-horse-movement/>

- [www.oie.int/self-declaration](http://www.oie.int/self-declaration)

### Instructions

**Read carefully the following fictive scenario, discuss in group, and answer collectively the questions. Be prepared to present your results to the other groups at the end of the exercise (please make sure to nominate a Rapporteur).**

**You can consult online resources as necessary.**

### Scenario

Your country plans to host an international horse sports competition in two years. The event will include the participation of competition horses coming/originating from countries with different animal health than your country. Therefore, the Chief Veterinary Officer decided that an EDFZ should be established.

As a national expert on equine diseases, your support was requested as a lead advisor.

A risk-based approach was followed to identify the diseases for which the EDFZ could potentially be declared free. According to the equine health status of the countries participating in the event and your country, five diseases were identified as relevant for the sport event your country is hosting: contagious equine metritis (CEM), West Nile fever (WNF), equine piroplasmiasis, equine influenza and glanders. It was decided to include only three of these diseases (i.e. equine piroplasmiasis, equine influenza, and glanders) for which the EDFZ is going to be established. You recommended to set up pre-requisites for the remaining two diseases (CEM and WNF).

You have been asked to develop a surveillance plan to demonstrate freedom from these three diseases.

### Questions & answers

1. *What were your justifications for selecting the three diseases for which the EDFZ could potentially be declared free and the pre-requisites to mitigate the risk of introduction or spreading of the other diseases?*

2. *List the main documents and Chapters of the OIE Terrestrial Code that you will refer to in order to identify the requirements to be complied with for demonstrating freedom from these three diseases in the Zone in accordance with OIE standards.*
3. *What are the requisites to claim freedom from glanders? And to claim freedom from Equine Influenza in a country where vaccination is not practised?*

Scenario (continuation)

The Veterinary Services have defined the boundaries of the EDFZ using geographical barriers. A fully fenced Core zone comprises the equestrian event venue and is surrounded by a Surveillance zone. To preserve the animal health status within the EDFZ, a Protection zone has been defined as a buffer outside of the Surveillance zone.

You have been asked to develop a risk mitigating strategy to prevent disease introduction into the EDFZ.

Questions & answers

4. *According to the main routes of diseases introduction for the diseases included in the EDFZ, what biosecurity measures should be implemented to prevent the introduction of these diseases and maintain the free status of the EDFZ?*
5. *What are the main prerequisites to ensure that control of animal movements can be effectively implemented?*

Scenario (continuation)

Your country wishes to submit a self-declaration of the EDFZ to the OIE for publication.

You have been asked to prepare the self-declaration.

By working together with your colleagues in charge of disease notification, you have ensured that all six-monthly and annual reports had been submitted in a timely manner to the OIE through WAHIS.

Questions & answers

6. *What are the main benefits of a publication of a self-declaration of an EDFZ by the OIE?*
7. *How would you organise this document? Please describe.*
8. *Is it possible to self-declare freedom from African horse sickness (AHS)? Please explain.*