

DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL SERVICES SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A Strategic Plan for Development of Farm Relief Programs following Natural Disasters and Control and Eradication Programs for Foreign Animal and Plant Diseases in South Australia

MISSION STATEMENT

To Ensure Optimum Preparedness for Agricultural and Animal Relief Programs following Natural Disasters and Outbreaks of Exotic Animal and Plant Diseases in South Australia

FOREWORD

This strategic plan is one of a series which has been developed for the principal South Australian agricultural industries and the services provided by the Department of Agriculture.

Agriculture contributes a greater proportion of returns to the State's economy than that of virtually any other state in Australia. It is therefore important to review the potential for the further development of agriculture in South Australia. These plans have been prepared by the staff of the Department of Agriculture in association with representatives of the respective agricultural industries and farmer organisations. The aim has been to identify the production potential and the market potential for the respective commodities and to thereby evaluate the opportunity which the state has to further develop its agricultural industries. At the same time, consideration has been given to identifying the most important issues to be addressed in the coming years to enable the state to achieve its maximum economic potential from agriculture. These plans will be valuable for determining the future provision of services to the rural community.

I should like to acknowledge the hard work and creative thought which both departmental staff and participants from industry and the farming community have put into the preparation of these plans.

John E. Radcuffe

(John C Radcliffe) <u>DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF AGRICULTURE</u>

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Agriculture has introduced a commodity-based planning process for delivery of its services to agricultural industries in South Australia.

Although the Disaster Relief Program is not a "commodity" in a strict sense (in comparison with wool, beef, wheat and citrus) it has been defined as a discrete area of activity within the Department worthy of a discrete plan of action. It is also recognised that disaster relief programs are integral to the core activity of the Department of Agriculture and that specific provision must be made in the planning and funding of departmental operations to ensure that the organisation's obligations under the State Disaster Act and other relevant State and Federal legislation are fully met.

The Disaster Relief Commodity Group, which produced the Industry Statement and subsequently the Commodity Plan, comprises Dr R Vandegraaff (Leader), R A Matthias, L D McLaren, Dr A L Barnett, G N Thomas, D Ragless and L D Murray. The Mission Statement of the Group (and the Plan) was determined as:

To Ensure Optimum Preparedness for Agricultural and Animal Relief Programs following Natural Disasters and Outbreaks of Exotic Animal and Plant Diseases in South Australia

As the first stage in the Commodity Planning process, during 1990 planning groups throughout the Department produced "Industry Statements" describing the current features of agricultural commodities (or industries) in South Australia, their production potential, barriers currently preventing or inhibiting development and current and planned departmental programs related to each commodity.

Comment on the Industry Statement was made by the State Disaster Committee, United Farmers and Stockowners of SA, the Advisory Board of Agriculture, all Participating Agencies in the Agricultural and Animal Services Functional Service under the State Disaster Plan and several other interested groups both within and outside the Department. The document was modified and amended as a consequence of the consultation process.

Following circulation of the amended Industry Statement, priorities for future departmental programs which address the Mission Statement of the Plan were developed by the Group.

The major program areas for priority action in a five-year program were:

- 1. Training of Staff and Participating Agencies
- 2. Testing of Plans and Procedures
- 3. Review of Legislation and Procedures
- 4. Public Education and Publicity
- 5. Technology Development
- 6. Monitoring Preparedness
- 7. Intelligence Systems

Specific projects within these major areas were identified, in terms of major client groups, established or potential funding sources, priority for implementation and proposed schedule for action. An appropriate departmental project leader for each project was also identified.

The document provides clear future direction for disaster relief programs under the State Disaster Plan as well as foreign animal and plant disease plans for the Department of Agriculture during the next decade.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS - AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL SERVICES

A Strategic Plan for Development of Farm Relief Programs following Natural Disasters and Control and Eradication Programs for Foreign Animal and Plant Diseases in South Australia

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Natural Disasters

Sudden disasters on a large scale are well known in Australia. Following a report of government response to major fires in the Western District and Gippsland regions of Victoria, the South Australian Department of Agriculture established a Bushfire Relief Committee in 1979 to formulate response plans for rural South Australia.

Ash Wednesday "1" in 1980 provided the first stimulus for more formal planning; the plans were severely tested in Ash Wednesday "2" in 1983, a disaster which, in SA alone, claimed 28 lives and resulted in injuries to more than 1500 people. Over 300 houses and 735 vehicles were destroyed; stock losses exceeded 0.25 million head. Nearly 1000 rural properties were affected and over 10 000 km of fencing destroyed. Property losses were estimated at over \$200 million.

Subsequent to these fires the SA Government commissioned a review of the State Disaster Plan. The review team recommended that all relief agencies participate in ongoing disaster relief planning; for the first time the key role of the Department of Agriculture was formally recognised in November 1984 when it assumed legal responsibility for the Functional Service, "Agricultural and Animal Services" (AAS) under the State Disaster Plan.

1.2 Foreign Animal Disease

In 1952 a relatively small outbreak of foot and mouth disease (FMD) in Canada cost that country \$1000M in 1952 dollars.

In 1955 a cost-sharing agreement was made between the Commonwealth and States of Australia so that the financial burden of an outbreak of FMD could be shared. It was recognised that an FMD outbreak would be a disaster of such proportions that no one State would have sufficient resources to deal with it.

In 1968 all States completed their first contingency plans for the eradication of FMD. Regular updating has occurred since then with planning initiatives and advances shared between State and Commonwealth disease control authorities.

Eleven other diseases were added to the cost-sharing agreement between 1955 and 1986.

In 1977 the South Australian Department of Agriculture conducted its first foreign animal disease field exercise; this was also the first "counter disaster" training of any kind given to staff in this State.

1.3 Pests and Diseases of Plants

The viability of Australia's plant industries depends on the country's freedom from a number of serious exotic plant diseases and pests. In addition, major response programs are invoked in South Australia for some endemic pests capable of periodic catastrophic invasion, including fruit fly and plague locusts.

Many and varied control and eradication strategies are required. For example the discovery of grapevine Phylloxera could demand extensive destruction of large areas of grapevines and widespread use of insecticides for insect eradication. An invasion of plague locusts requires a campaign of spraying to prevent the spread of locusts into the cropping and pasture areas of the State.

During the last 10 years, isolated outbreaks of exotic plant conditions have occurred in Australia (for example, Potato Cyst Nematode, Onion Smut and Chrysanthemum White Rust) and resulted in implementation of surveillance programs in SA by the State Department of Agriculture. The degree of financial support to States is dependent on the disease or pest involved; if it is determined to be eradicable, the SCA Consultative Committee may invoke a cost-sharing agreement.

In 1987-88 a major invasion of Australian Plague Locusts in the Flinders Ranges required an extensive aerial spraying program. Due to the complexity of ground and aerial operations over a large area of difficult terrain, an extensive radiocommunications system was required for three months. Assistance with both equipment and operators was provided by the State Emergency Service.

Increasing world trade is resulting in higher risks of introduction of exotic plant diseases. Rapid and prepared response is vital for the protection of local industries.

2. INDUSTRIES AND REGIONS AT RISK

Disaster relief programs affect all industries and geographical regions. The most extensive and costly bushfire disasters have tended to occur in the higher-rainfall areas of the State, particularly the Adelaide Hills and South East; these areas would also appear to be at greater risk of both introduction and spread of exotic animal diseases. However there would be more difficulty in containing a disease if it were to occur in the more extensive areas of the State. Companion animals (and humans) are special groups at risk from rabies.

It is also important to consider that an incursion of foreign animal disease impacts clearly (and perhaps more severely) in other States as well as in the State of "origin" because of loss of international markets.

A plant pest or disease emergency in any part of Australia may mean implementing controls on the movement of plant material into South Australia and extensive surveillance and testing to ensure the State remains free. For example the discovery of potato cyst nematode in Western Australia resulted in restrictions on entry of potatoes into SA from that State. Inadequate controls over such pests can seriously jeopardise Australia's export effort.

3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF DISASTERS

3.1 Natural Disasters

Bushfires and other natural disasters obviously vary greatly in impact with scale, ferocity and location. For example preliminary estimates of property damage from the recent Newcastle earthquake are around \$1000 million. Apart from the property losses of \$200 million caused by the bushfires on Ash Wednesday 2, residual problems and financial effects of long-term legal liability in the wake of the fires have recently brought down one local government corporation and caused other serious community effects. The short-term physical and long-term emotional implications are also relevant and the emotional effects cannot be measured or valued.

The Australian Counter Disaster College (ACDC) uses the "Federal Emergency Management Agency" (FEMA) model developed in the USA as a basis for ranking hazards. The model assesses hazards (disasters) based on history, probability, vulnerability and threat. The model shows that in virtually all rural situations in South Australia bushfires are a hazard which should receive maximum priority in disaster planning.

3.2 Foreign Animal Disease

The economic cost to Australia of an outbreak of FMD is currently estimated at \$6 billion plus \$8 million for each day the outbreak lasts. This is due to the immediate cessation of export markets for beef and dairy products, some disruption to the wool industry and possibly loss of some grain exports as well.

Exports to USA (for example) would not resume until at least 12 months after FMD is declared eradicated. The protracted presence of FMD in Australia would lead to massive restructuring of rural industries.

A number of other foreign animal diseases have the potential to wipe out industries; for example, virulent Newcastle Disease would probably decimate the poultry industry. A single outbreak of any one of several other diseases (both within and outside the cost-sharing agreement) is likely to cost at least \$100 million.

3.3 "Exotic" Plant Diseases and Pests

The estimated value to South Australia of the annual fruit crop in the Riverland is \$170m. An outbreak of fruit fly in that area would threaten the viability of the whole industry; the cost of control of a small outbreak is estimated at \$250,000.

In South Australia, the total value of agricultural crops and pastures at risk to plague locust damage is about \$662 million. The size of the risk is also very great - the cost of damage caused by the 1934 locust plague was \$63m (current value) in New South Wales alone. On the other hand the cost of control is relatively small in comparison: in 1987 about 144 000 hectares were successfully sprayed in SA in the face of an impending disaster for a total cost of about \$1.5 million.

Costs to South Australia of outbreaks of serious plant diseases have also been estimated. An outbreak of onion smut would cost the State 55% of its interstate onion trade per year for 15 years - a total cost of \$10 million. The State's \$82 million income from winegrapes is at risk to grapevine Phylloxera; it could be speculated that a proportion of the Barossa Valley representing 10% (\$8.2M) of the State's income could become infected and taken out of production.

As a pest of stored grain, Khapra beetle is viewed as seriously as fruit flies in fruit. Australia's freedom from this pest is vital to grain exports; to South Australia it is therefore worth about \$75 million per year.

4. CURRENT STATUS OF DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS

4.1 Categories of Disaster

In accord with the provisions of the State Disaster Act, the Department of Agriculture is concerned with the following categories of disasters:

- * natural (rapid response) disasters bushfire, flood, earthquake, cyclone, water supply emergency
- * industrial (non-natural) disasters chemical spill, environmental contamination these may require either rapid or gradual response
- * foreign animal and plant diseases

Each disaster type is dealt with under a specific sub-plan, prepared by the designated Primary (Lead) Combat Authority. The Department of Agriculture is the Primary Combat Authority in foreign animal and plant disease programs.

Major incidents of (endemic) plant diseases and pests with potential to devastate parts of South Australia's economy (fruit fly, plague locusts) are currently handled under separate

legislation; should an outbreak of either of these reach "disaster" proportions (as defined under the State Disaster Act), the Department of Agriculture would presumably assume the role of Primary Combat Authority for the duration of the "Disaster Period". Since the Department would have the main role both before and following the declared Disaster Period, the smooth integration of other functional services in that situation may need some planning and practice.

Drought is currently not covered by the definition of "disaster" under the Act; the role of disaster relief authorities in drought programs is therefore not defined. This may not be an issue given the Department of Agriculture's existing leading role in provision of drought relief information and the expanding role of its Rural Finance and Development Division in provision of financial relief. The place of drought in natural disaster legislation nationally is still under review.

For its activity in counter disaster programs, the Department of Agriculture variously operates under the following legislation:

- * Commonwealth Quarantine Act
- Commonwealth Exotic Disease Control Act
- * State Disaster Act
- * Stock Act
- * Foot and Mouth Disease Eradication Fund Act
- * Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act
- * Fruit and Plant Protection Act
- Noxious Insects Act
- * Animal and Plant Protection Act
- * Phylloxera Act

4.2 Current Role and Preparedness Under State Disaster Plan

The role of the Department as co-ordinator of AAS is given in detail in the AAS Sub-plan of the State Disaster Plan. The main requirements are to

- * prepare and update the AAS Sub-plan
- * establish and maintain the State Control Centre
- * establish and maintain adequate communications to expedite disaster relief operations
- * provide staff and resources to support State Disaster operations in the State Control Centre as well as in the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) and regional (Divisional or Local) Control Centres
- * co-ordinate the activities of participating agencies (RSPCA, AVA, DPIE, Stock Salesmen's Association, Abattoirs operators and the United Farmers and Stockowners) and
- * maintain readiness through adequate training.

The role of AAS Functional Service in a disaster relief program (other than as Primary Combat Authority in an exotic disease) is to provide immediate animal assessment and relief services and ongoing rehabilitation assistance to primary producers.

For rapid-response disasters, Departmental roles and functions are firmly established in a series of Appendices to the AAS Sub-plan. For bushfire relief activity, job descriptions (or "job cards") have been prepared for key operational groups in the Local or Divisional Control Centre; in addition, a printed field guide is available to assist staff in the assessment of burnt livestock.

These documents and guides have all been produced since Ash Wednesday 1983; although some of them have been used in field exercises in 1984 and 1985 and in minor fire relief operations since then, thorough field testing and review is required. The guide booklet on assessment of livestock is currently undergoing substantial amendment of sections on organisational structure and staff roles in line with recommendations from staff at exercises and with the requirements of the State Disaster Plan.

Divisional Disaster Plans (and Local Plans where they exist) also contain sections dealing specifically with Agricultural and Animal Services and the role of local Departmental staff.

Contact lists for staff involved in key roles are updated annually prior to the bushfire season. A meeting convened for departmental staff and participating agencies at the same time provides the opportunity to highlight issues and refresh knowledge of roles and procedures.

4.3 Current Role and Preparedness under AUSVETPLAN

AUSVETPLAN comprises a series of broad strategy documents which prescribe organisational structures, roles and procedures for dealing with foreign animal diseases. Within AUSVETPLAN, States (including South Australia) are responsible for preparing operational sub-plans ("action plans") which are compatible and integrated with the national plan.

The South Australian Vesicular Diseases Manual, the State's contingency plan for FMD first prepared in 1968, has been regularly updated since then and is currently being re-written as SA's foreign animal diseases Action Plan under AUSVETPLAN.

An outbreak of FMD would almost certainly lead to declaration of a State Disaster. It is also likely that any foreign animal disease containment program will require support from other functional services under the State Disaster Plan. The roles of these functional services are detailed in another document, the Exotic Animal Disease Sub-plan of the AAS Plan. This document is also updated annually and has recently been amended to align it (as closely as possible) with AUSVETPLAN format and terminology.

Members of other functional services (principally Police and State Emergency Service) have been involved in exotic disease workshops and exercises in recent years, especially since AAS was recognised under the State Disaster Plan.

Staff training in foreign animal disease preparedness has been steady but under severe budget restrictions during the last 10 years. A series of 2-day workshops was organised for regional staff around the State in 1986 and 1987; from these, the organisational structure and operational procedures for local and State headquarters activities evolved. This process has been aided by attendance of key staff at exercises interstate, ACDC training courses, overseas disease recognition courses and more recently, diagnostic courses at AAHL, Geelong.

Three-day training courses for private veterinary practitioners on recognition of foreign animal disease have been organised by the Department (using Federal funding and interstate as well as local resources) in 1987, 1989 and 1990.

A State Task Force has been identified for management of a Local Disease Control Centre and training of this group has commenced in workshops in October 1988, April 1989, June 1990 and September 1991. Work is needed to further define and train the Task Force. Initial versions of key role statements and job descriptions have been written but require testing and refinement.

4.4 Other Plans

Outbreaks of exotic plant diseases and pests are dealt with on a national basis through an SCA Consultative Committee.

At State level a major sub-plan of the State Disaster Plan has been prepared (Sub-plan Exotic Diseases, Plants) which details roles and procedures for AAS as the lead combat authority in a plant disease containment program. There are no details provided of the roles of other Functional Services; although these may be few and variable because such outbreaks usually do not require rapid response, some guidelines may be necessary.

Specific procedural manuals exist for dealing with outbreaks of fruit fly and plague locusts. The integration of these plans with the State Disaster Plan is a task that should be addressed in the future.

4.5 Internal and External Resources

Personnel resources for AAS activity are drawn from staff whose tasks are not normally disaster related. A lot depends on having the right people in appropriate roles and the long-term nature of disaster planning (as well as the loss and turnover of staff) make efficient resource management a complex task.

The 1989-90 operational budget for activity under the AAS Functional Service was \$30 000. The current resources are:

* One full-time-equivalent officer (R Matthias) to assist in development and production of operational plans and guidelines, to manage the arrangement of training programs and to provide administrative support to the State Controller including budget management.

- * Other officers who devote a proportion of their duties to comply with State Disaster Act planning / training responsibilities, including the Director of Regions and Extension (as State Controller), a Senior Agricultural Adviser (as Functional Service Liaison Officer), Chief Regional Officers, Regional Officers and Branch Heads.
- * The Agriculture Hall at Wayville showgrounds is maintained at all times on standby as State Control Centre for AAS in the event of a disaster. A section of office space on the 15th Floor of the Grenfell Centre is maintained for ready conversion to a State Disease Control Headquarters.
- * An emergency radio-communications network, independent of Telecom telephone services, covers the whole State with base stations at Regional (HF) and District (VHF) headquarters and mobiles in 100 vehicles.
- * Current AAS Plans, Action Plans and sets of 1:50 000 topographical/cadastral maps distributed statewide.

For foreign animal disease programs 0.8 FTE is provided as a specialist veterinary officer. Associated with this position there is an operating budget of \$19000 to cover all travel and printing costs (mostly for Manual updates) as well as exercises and cost of attendance at AAHL courses.

The Commonwealth has also provided a small contribution to assist with workshops and exercises but this was discontinued in 1990-91 and appears unlikely to be resumed in the short term.

Staff resources for regional planning and training programs are provided from the Regions. The Regional Veterinary Officer (Central and Murray Lands) currently allocates about 10% of time to foreign animal disease programs.

Fruit fly prevention is a function of the Pest Eradication Unit (PEU), a permanent dedicated task force within the Department of Agriculture, with its own organisational structure which includes a network of road blocks. The PEU currently has a permanent staff of 28 officers and an annual budget of \$1 million. It operates under the Fruit Fly Act and the Fruit and Plant Protection Act; in addition to its specific function in fruit fly prevention it is maintained on standby as a field force for plague locust control and exotic plant disease programs.

5. NEED AND POTENTIAL FOR NEW AND EXPANDED PROGRAMS

5.1 Relief Programs Under the State Disaster Plan

Effective planning for counter disaster activities is an on-going process. Effective response depends on clearly identified contacts and responsible people, with clearly specified roles. Familiarity of key staff with roles and organisational structures is essential.

This is not a mainstream function of the Department of Agriculture. It therefore requires active and regular stimulation from the State Controller or delegate, by

- * annual review of the Plan
- * annual meeting for key personnel and participating agencies
- refresher workshops and exercises
- * "spot" meetings with key (departmental) State and Divisional disaster response personnel to ensure that they are adequately prepared for incidents and
- * relevant outside training opportunities.

Specific needs to be addressed in the short term include completion of the revision of the field manual on bushfire relief and field training to test the function of the Local Control Centre and field radio-communications.

5.2 Programs under AUSVETPLAN

National strategy and operational manuals on specific procedures and diseases have recently been prepared by national working groups reporting to the Exotic Diseases Sub-Committee of SCA Animal Health Committee. Manual sets of AUSVETPLAN were distributed to key response personnel nationally during 1991.

Within South Australia, the following are the major planning and training needs:

- (a) update of all existing contingency plans to AUSVETPLAN format
- (b) updating of existing Action Plans, role/task descriptions (and for some tasks, job cards) and writing of some new ones where necessary
- (c) intensive workshops and field exercises to test all aspects of local plans as well as specific activities and groups, especially the Local Disease Control Centre Task Force and the State Headquarters function
- (d) education of non "animal health" staff and the industries and public on the relevance and importance of foreign animal disease preparedness
- (e) to make sufficient progress in all these activities within 3 years in order to make a useful contribution to a planned large-scale multi-state exercise.

5.3 Programs for Dealing With Exotic Plant Diseases

There are relatively few outstanding needs in this area; access to regular and ongoing training in radiocommunications is always a priority, normally available through the State Emergency Service. Liaison with key regional staff must be maintained with regular personnel turnover and reorganisation of field services.

5.4 Drought Programs

National drought strategy has been subject to a recent major review. Its findings largely support the stance taken in South Australia in recent years. A special national working group has been established to develop strategies for the adoption of the review findings.

6. BARRIERS TO ACHIEVEMENT OF NEEDS AND POTENTIAL

6.1 Training Skills and Resources

Few people are trained as trainers. Consequently the burden of organisation of staff training programs falls on the same few individuals in both the major areas of training need - bushfire relief and foreign animal disease.

In the case of animal disease programs, the shortage of appropriately skilled and accessible veterinary staff substantially reduces South Australia's capacity to run training programs and increases our dependence on interstate and other (expensive) resources.

6.2 Client Education

While other counter disaster authorities are willing supporters, there is still a large amount of ignorance in the general community, especially of the real risks and implications of a foreign animal disease outbreak. Even some supporting disaster relief agencies are unfamiliar with the implications and roles in a disease containment program that may last several weeks or months.

6.3 Funding

Funding is the major barrier to current counter disaster (including foreign animal disease) programs. Without additional funding, South Australia (and, at least in respect of animal disease planning, other States as well) will be unable to achieve a satisfactory level of preparedness.

Closely related to funding is the availability of personnel resources to implement the projects identified under the commodity of "Disaster Relief". This commodity, in contrast to most other "true" commodities subject to this planning process, has very few resources, either headquarters or field-based, devoted to it. While planning and priority setting are important functions of the Commodity Group, there is currently no specific provision for disaster relief tasks or functions in the Job Specifications of most staff and no budget allocation for them, even for key staff involved in Task Force activity.

The range of funding sources is limited at present and other possibilities (such as industry levies and export licence fees) will be examined carefully in the development of projects under this Plan, taking account of the major "client" (beneficiary) groups involved.

The potential role of Rural Industry Funds, such as those available from the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), AMLRDC and the Wool Corporation have been investigated in general terms; again, they may be considered for individual projects. There may also be scope for wider use of National Disaster Organisation funding through the Australian Counter Disaster College.

6.4 Attitude and Commitment of Staff, Government, Industries and the Public

In the past, there has been insufficient support for this activity from some Directors and Divisional Heads. Although this situation has improved somewhat recently, the occasional reluctance of senior management to support or encourage participation in training programs remains a barrier.

The "we don't want to know" attitude of many field and headquarters staff is also a barrier and a high priority for addressing in training and awareness programs.

Public ignorance has been mentioned already but ignorance and apathy of industries likely to be most affected by rural disasters is another barrier.

6.5 Marketing Skills and Resources

Marketing, both in the context of public information and instruction before the event and "selling" the counter disaster (or disease containment) program as it happens, is a potential problem. The skills and resources needs here should be recognised as part of the funding barrier.

A new initiative is already underway at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (Geelong) to produce a set of easy-reference publications on foreign animal disease, for public distribution at short notice. Supplementary publications explaining local arrangements are needed and the proposal is to be included in the action plan for the Disaster Relief Support Section for 1991-92.

6.6 Legislation

The State Disaster Act was reviewed following Ash Wednesday II; the State Disaster Plan, which proved inadequate to cope with Ash Wednesday, was also re-written but neither the legislation nor the plan have been tested in a real disaster since. There is, despite the use of disaster "exercises", a potential credibility problem which may prove a barrier to effective preparation.

The new South Australian Stock Act, proclaimed early in 1991, addresses problems with legal powers detected in the former Stock Diseases Act and is expected to be adequate to cover foreign animal disease contingencies.

7. CURRENT PROGRAMS

7.1 Legislation and Policy

State Disaster Legislation and Relief Procedures

Specific procedures under the State Disaster Plan are developed or updated at intervals. AAS is involved in this activity; for example currently guidelines for management of a water emergency are being developed with input from the Department of Agriculture. The procedures for "Emergency Response to a Leakage or Spillage of a Dangerous Substance" have recently been reviewed with inputs from AAS.

There is a continuing need for recognition and integration of the role of AAS, as the most recently identified Functional Service, into procedure guideline documents produced by lead combat authorities under the State Disaster Plan. This is an on-going activity associated with primary planning by other combat authorities.

Foreign Animal Disease Legislation and Policy

The S.A. Stock Act (1990), which was passed in State Parliament early in 1991, provides for enhanced and refined powers to deal specifically with foreign animal diseases.

South Australian foreign animal disease veterinary authorities contributed in 1990 to a review by EXANDIS (the Federal Government's Exotic Animal Disease Preparedness Council) of all States' and Territories' legislation to assess its adequacy and compatibility. The investigation resulted in some appropriate changes in legislation (during review of the Stock Act) and policy in this State. Another EXANDIS consultancy is currently assessing the feasibility of Federal "regional" co-ordination of FAD programs developed by the States.

7.2 Planning

Annual Update of AAS Sub-plan

Relevant contact lists and Action Plans are updated annually by the Manager, Emergency Support Services.

Development of AUSVETPLAN

The national EDSC objective was to get a first edition of AUSVETPLAN to an operational stage by November 1990. South Australia agreed to the secondment of Dr Barnett full-time for 6 months from July 1990 to assist DPIE with this task. The objective was achieved and the documents have been distributed in completed stages to relevant State veterinary authorities.

VETLAB Activity

VETLAB has recently revised its contingency plan, which has since been used as the model code for the AUSVETPLAN Laboratory Preparedness Manual.

In 1990 VETLAB conducted a one-week training exercise for all laboratory staff to develop their skills to carry out tests that may be required. It has a commitment to run similar programs regularly. Staff of VETLAB contribute to practitioner training workshops and exotic disease training exercises organised by the Animal Health Branch and Regional animal health groups.

Radio Communications

A program of installation of HF and VHF radio at strategic centres and in mobiles throughout the State is continuing with most centres now covered; after an initial orientation period on exclusive departmental frequencies, conversion of the VHF system to SES repeater frequencies is currently underway, to greatly improve the range and utility of the Department's network.

Application has also been made to install a repeater at Lenswood Research Centre to improve the Central Hills network. Plans are in hand to install a HF Base at Ceduna to provide a 24-hour listening service to the WA border.

Northfield Relocation

The HF radio base at Northfield will be relocated to Lenswood; the latter site is also being examined as a possible site for Codan's Remote Receiver Facility (used by the Australian Customs Service) and for remote receivers for the Police and SES.

7.3 Training

General Counter-Disaster Training

Training in mapping techniques (with speakers from SES, the Department of Lands and the Bureau of Meteorology - 1990 and 1991), radiocommunications (using SES resources - continuing) and testing of plans (held irregularly in both Adelaide and regional locations) occurs on a priority basis.

State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) Workshops

At the commencement of each summer season a familiarisation session is held for Functional Service personnel. In 1990 AAS introduced several new staff to act as assistants in the SEOC to the Functional Service Liaison Officer.

Australian Counter Disaster College Courses

Department of Agriculture Officers have attended several courses run by ACDC at Mount Macedon (Victoria) and Fort Largs Police Academy in South Australia. Arrangements are made (following invitation only) through the South Australian SES for attendance at various course types depending on priority and availability of appropriate staff. Attendances from SA number 3-4 per year.

Foreign Animal Diseases Training Committee

A departmental committee was formed during 1990 to plan and implement training programs on foreign animal diseases. It is chaired by the Senior Veterinary Officer (FAD) and includes the Divisional Training Officer, the Principal Veterinary Officer (Field Services), the Manager, Emergency Support Services and the Leader of the Disaster Relief Program Commodity Group. For training events in regions, the appropriate Regional Veterinary Officer is co-opted to the committee.

Foreign Animal Disease Task Force Training

A series of workshops and exercises is currently in progress to train a Task Force to establish and run a Local Disease Control Centre. The objective is to reach competency by June 1992.

Disinfection Workshops

The first formal workshop to train departmental staff and support personnel in disinfection techniques was held in Port Lincoln in November 1989. Similar workshops were held in Whyalla in 1990 and in South East and Central Regions in 1991.

Disinfection procedures and basic instructions have been printed on wallet-sized cards for easy reference and distribution.

AAHL Courses

State funds have so far been budgeted to send four officers each year to training courses at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory, Geelong. Courses commenced in 1989; the main emphasis is on field recognition of clinical and autopsy features of foreign animal diseases.

7.4 Staff and Public Awareness

Marketing Resources

This issue was referred to in Section 6.5 as a problem to be addressed in a new project to be undertaken by the State Disaster Support group in 1991-92. The project aims to produce a range of information packages for staff and outside groups. Included as an early task is re-writing of the manual of procedures for AAS in bushfire relief.

Practitioner Training

There is currently a commitment using Commonwealth funds to continue with the current program of holding a practitioner training course in foreign animal disease recognition and planning every two years; the next course is planned for 1992.

8. THE STRATEGIC PLAN

8.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Disaster Relief Plan (Agriculture and Animal Services) are

- * to define the key components of AAS operations
- * to document priorities for planning of AAS operations and training of staff and other relevant personnel
- * to define appropriate funding sources, outline a schedule for implementation of programs and specify individuals and groups responsible and accountable for them.

8.2 Priority Issues and Proposed Initiatives

High-priority tasks under the Disaster Relief Program fall within seven "major sub-program areas", rated in the following order of importance, as determined by the Commodity Group following consultation with Industry and key community and departmental groups.

- 1. Training of Staff and Participating Agencies
- 2. Testing of Plans and Procedures
- 3. Review of Legislation and Procedures
- 4. Public Education and Publicity
- 5. Technology Development
- 6. Monitoring Preparedness
- 7. Intelligence Systems

Training of staff and Testing of plans and procedures clearly imply separate project objectives but these can often be addressed together in specific projects such as field exercises.

Review of procedures is both an ongoing (updating) process and an extension of the "testing" process.

"Monitoring preparedness" is the process of maintaining an accurate, rapidly retrievable inventory of personnel, resources plans and procedure documents for use in a disaster as well as keeping track of the state of preparedness and training of key personnel.

Intelligence systems, on the other hand, are the communications and information systems in place to ensure accurate and prompt information transfer at the time of disaster and in the immediate post-disaster period.

Each of these major sub-program areas was considered separately to identify specific projects of high priority. Project proposals were then considered in terms of primary client, priority for action, most appropriate funding source, a preferred deadline for completion (action or regular report) and appropriate project leaders.

8.3 Client Groups, Funding and Resources and Implementation

The projects within each major program area are given in Tables 1 to 7.

With very few exceptions the major client of natural disaster relief programs is the State (Government); some of the high-priority projects associated with exotic animal and plant diseases have a substantial Industry benefit or would be conducted primarily in the National interest through the Federal Government.

The major "client" of projects listed in Tables 1 to 7 is therefore the State Government. The projects are listed in priority order; the timing given reflects, as far as possible, practical deadlines given the priority of the work and the current resources available.

Several projects are assigned the priority of "ongoing" and listed by priority in the project column in each major sub-program area. These are projects which are already, or will shortly be, scheduled into work programs of the Divisions or Regions in the Department and for which regular output is required.

TABLE 1 Major Sub-Program Area No 1

<u>Training of Staff and Participating Agencies</u>*

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Sources	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leader
Formation of Training Committee for AAS	State	State	Dec 1991	R Matthias
2. Assessment of Bushfire Injury	State (AAS, RSPCA, DPIE)	Industry (Stock, insurance) State	Nov 1991	J Tolson (R Giesecke)
3. Exercise Writing and Management	State	Federal (ACDC)	1992	R Giesecke
4. Radiocommunication	State	State	Dec 1991	R Matthias (SES)
5. Task Force Training (Foreign Animal Disease)	Federal/State	Federal/State (EXANDIS)		A Barnett
5.1 LDCC Operations 5.2 ANEMIS 5.3 Information Systems 5.4 State DCHQ Operations			Sep 1991 Jun 1992 Dec 1992 Dec 1992	
5.5 LDCC/SDCHQ Liaison 5.6 Mapping 5.7 Decontamination 5.8 Surveillance			Sep 1991 Dec 1992 Dec 1991 ongoing	
6. Legal Requirements and Responsibilities	State	State	Mar 1992	L Murray
7. AAS Field Operations	State	State	Nov 1991	R Vandegraaff
8. SCC Task Force Operations	State	State	Jun 1992	G N Thomas (R Matthias)
9. Diagnostic Procedures (Animal and Plant)	Federal/State	Federal/State	ongoing	A Barnett /VETLAB (AAHL)
10. Mapping	State	State	Jun 1993	R Matthias

^{*} where appropriate these programs will be co-ordinated with the State Disaster Committee's training programs

Major Sub-Program Area No 2 Testing of Plans/Procedures* TABLE 2

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Sources	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leader
AAS Subplan - LCC Operation	State	State	Nov 1991	A Barnett
2. AUSVETPLAN - Control Centre Management	Federal/State	Federal	Sep 1991	A Barnett
3. Testing of Information Systems (AAS, AUSVETPLAN)	State/Federal	State/Federal	AAS:Nov '91; ANEMIS: '93	R Matthias A Barnett
4. AAS Subplan - SCC Operations	State	State	Nov 1991 (annual)**	G N Thomas (L McLaren)
5. Testing of Radio- Comms systems	State	State	Nov 1991	R Matthias (SES)
6. Admin Systems (AUSVETPLAN)	State	State	June 1992	A Barnett
7. Admin Systems (AAS)	State	State	June 1993	R Matthias
8. SDCHQ Operations	Federal/State	Federal/State	Dec 1992	A Barnett (J Tolson)
9. SDCHQ/LCC Liaison	Federal/State	Federal/State	Sep 1991	A Barnett
10. ANEMIS	Federal	Federal	Dec 1992	A Barnett / DARA
11. AUSVETPLAN (Action Plans)	State	EXANDIS	ongoing	A Barnett

Schedule and priority of projects matches Program Area No 1. determined mainly by State Disaster Committee training program

TABLE 3 Major Sub-Program Area No 3
<u>Legislation and Procedure Review</u>

	r	r		
Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Source	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leader
1. Bushfire Manual	State, Fed (DPIE)	State Govt.	Dec 1991	R Matthias
2. SA Action Plan (AUSVETPLAN)	State, Federal	State Govt. EXANDIS	Apr 1992	A Barnett
3. Job Descriptions (AAS)	State	State Govt.	Dec 1991	R Matthias
4. Job Descriptions (AUSVETPLAN)	State	State Govt. EXANDIS	ongoing	A Barnett
5. Task Force for AAS	State	State	June 1992	G N Thomas (R Matthias)
6. Funding of Relief Program (AAS)	State	State	Jul 1992	G N Thomas
7. Plague Locust Plan	State/Federal	Industries, State and Federal Govt	Dec 1991	L Murray (R Van Velsen)
8. Plant Disease Plans	State/Federal	Plant Industries, State/Federal	Dec 1991	L Murray (R Van Velsen)
9. Participation in AEADPP*	Federal Govt. Industry	Federal Govt & EXANDIS	ongoing	A Barnett
10. Stock Act Review	State	State	Recently completed	A Barnett

^{*} Australian Exotic Animal Disease Preparedness Program

TABLE 4 Major Sub-Program Area No 4
Public Education

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Source	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leader
Strategies for Public Response Agency Education on AAS Role	State	State Govt	ongoing from Sept 1991	G N Thomas (R Matthias)
Information Kits - Foreign Animal Disease 3. Public Awareness -	Federal, Industry, State	Federal Govt Industry	ongoing to June 1993	AAHL
Foreign Animal Disease	Federal, Industry, State	Federal Govt EXANDIS	ongoing	A Barnett (RVO's)

TABLE 5 Major Sub-Program Area No 5
<u>Technology Development</u>

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Source	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leaders
Operational Communication Systems Development	State	State Govt.	Dec 1993	R Matthias
Information Management System Software (AAS) 2.1 Review 2.2 Development	State	State Govt.	Ongoing to Dec 1993	R Vandegraaff (M Holmes)
3. Electronic Mapping	State	State Govt.	Ongoing to Dec 1992	D Ragless

TABLE 6 Major Sub-Program Area No 6
Monitoring of Preparedness

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Source	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leader
Task Force Management Information Systems				
1.1 Foreign Animal Disease	Federal/State	Federal/State	Ongoing	A Barnett
1.2 AAS (SCC) 1.3 AAS (Divisions)	State State	State State	Nov 1991 Nov 1991	R Matthias G N Thomas (Divisional Controller)
Management Information Systems (Participating Agencies)	State	State	1993	R Matthias
3. Sites for Local Control Centres (AAS) 4. Staff Lists	State	State	June 1992	R Matthias (Divisional Controller)
4.1 Districts 4.2 Other	State State	State State	Dec 1991 Dec 1991	R Matthias Chief Regional Officers

TABLE 7 Major Sub-Program Area No 7
<u>Intelligence Systems</u>

Projects (in priority order)	Client Groups	Proposed Funding Source	Scheduled Completion / Action Date	Project Leaders
AAS Intelligence Strategies	State	State	June 1992	R Matthias (R Vandegraaff)
2. CFS/AAS Liaison	State	State	Dec 1991	G N Thomas (R Matthias)
3. Divisional Intelligence Systems/Strategies	State, Cwth (DPIE)	State	Dec 1992	L McLaren
4. SEOC Systems	State	State	Nov 1991	D Ragless

9. REVIEW

The review process for this plan will have two components. The first is by consideration of progress of individual projects and major sub-program areas in regular meetings of the Commodity Group; the other will be an update and re-release of the Plan at regular intervals of 12 to 18 months.

Reports on specific aspects of the program will be submitted to the Director General as appropriate.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAHL Australian Animal Health Laboratory

AAS Agriculture and Animal Services (SA State Disaster Plan)

ACDC Australian Counter Disaster College

AMLRDC Australian Meat and Livestock Research and Development Corporation

ANEMIS Animal Disease Emergency Information System

AUSVETPLAN Australian Foreign Animal Disease Contingency Plans

AVA Australian Veterinary Association

DARA Victorian Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

DPIE Department of Primary Industries and Energy

EDSC Exotic Diseases Sub-committee (of SCA)

EXANDIS National Exotic Animal Disease Preparedness Council

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

FMD Foot and Mouth Disease

HF High Frequency

LCC Local Control Centre

LDCC Local Disease Control Centre

PEU Pest Eradication Unit

RIRDC Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation

RSPCA Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal

SCA Standing Committee on Agriculture

SCC State Control Centre (AAS)

SDCHQ State Disease Control Headquarters

SEOC State Emergency Operations Centre

SES South Australian State Emergency Service

VETLAB Veterinary Laboratory Services Branch (SA Dept of Agriculture)

VHF Very High Frequency