



OFFLU STEERING AND EXECUTIVE MEETING TELECONFERENCE

15 November 2018 (14h to 16h Paris time)

1. Update of OFFLU committee changes and introductions :

Dr Peter Daniels stepped down as Chairman of the OFFLU Steering Committee in August 2018. The OFFLU committees appreciated his dedication and commitment to the success and growth of OFFLU network since its launch and wished him all the best for the future.

Following this, OIE and FAO appointed Prof Ian Brown as the new Chairman of the OFFLU Steering Committee and Dr Mia Torchetti as the new member of the OFFLU Steering Committee from October 2018. Prof Brown remarked he intended to provide leadership that would maintain the continuity and project OFFLU value to the global community and continue to deliver timely outputs through the network of technical activities. Dr Torchetti informed that it is a honour to be involved in the Steering Committee and look forward to support the OFFLU activities.

Dr Cristian DeBattisti, the new FAO focal point officer to OFFLU introduced himself to the Committees. Previously, Dr DeBattisti was a scientist at the OIE/FAO Reference Centre in Padova, Italy before joining as EMPRES lab unit coordinator at FAO with OFFLU tasks included. Currently he is serving as the OFFLU focal point officer from FAO and will be leading the search for a new OFFLU scientist.

Ms Tianna Brand will no longer serve in the OFFLU committees following restructuring of duties in the OIE Headquarters. Dr Gregorio Torres from OIE Science department will take the place of Ms Brand in the Executive Committee. Dr Gounalan Pavade will continue as the OFFLU Secretariat.

Considering Dr Nicola Lewis current first term in the EC ends by December 2018, the SC endorsed her extension for the second term for three more years until 7 December 2021 and it was accepted by Dr Lewis.

The other member terms that ends in next year (2019) include the second terms of Dr Swayne and Dr Cattoli in the EC, and Dr Viljoen in the SC. Replacements on SC will need to be appointed by consensus by FAO and OIE leadership and for the EC by the SC by mid-2019.

2. Review of OFFLU TA table with a brief update from each TA on recent or forthcoming activity with 1 – 3 year work plans

a) Avian influenza including Ring trial – Ian Brown

Prof Brown shared the work plans (one to three years) for the avian influenza group technical activity and the document is available at

http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/meeting-reports/pdf/OFFLU_Brighton/OFFLU_AI_work_plan_2019-21.pdf

The group will review and update laboratory protocols as required to ensure fit for purpose for emerging viruses, support the parent organisations on an *ad-hoc* basis to develop information notes and situation reports, provide an annual update on the HPAI virus cleavage site document, provide risk assessments when needed, update the research agenda and contribute to the continual review of the nomenclature of H5Nx and other AI viruses.

The main technical activities planned include the characterisation of H5 and other subtypes to inform technical recommendations for poultry vaccine strain selection based on diversity, improved understanding of zoonotic risk for animal influenza virus lineages, and harmonisation of laboratory diagnostic PCR methods as well as demonstration of fitness for purpose on a global scale through ring trials.

An update on the OFFLU ring trial for 2018 coordinated by AAHL, Australia was provided to the committee. Questions were raised about the utility of results and follow up action from the ring trial tests.

Action: Ian Brown to contact AAHL, Australia to check how the outputs from the ring trial results could be better utilized for action and followed up.

b) Swine influenza – Marie Culhane (Nicola Lewis)

Dr Lewis provided an update on behalf of Dr Marie Culhane and Dr Taki Saito, the co-chairs of this activity. Three main outputs were presented to the committee.

The swine influenza virus (SIV) experts met in April 2017 at Brighton to finalise the work plans (1 -3 years) and this document is available at

http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/meeting-reports/pdf/OFFLU_Brighton/Offlu_Swine_group_1_and_3_year_plan.pdf

A regional OFFLU SIV expert Latin America meeting was organized in October 2018 during Brazilian Veterinary Congress. At the meeting, regional issues were discussed and outcomes will be fed into the main SIV meeting. The meeting summary is available at

http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/meeting-reports/pdf/OFFLU_regional_SIV_Brazil/OFFLU_SIV_Gramado_Brazil_Final.pdf

The planning for the next OFFLU SIV technical meeting is ongoing and fixed on 27 – 28 February 2019 at OIE Headquarters, Paris. Partial funding for the organization of this meeting is available, but it does not cover the participation of all involved experts. So FAO and OIE will look into for additional funding to cover the other experts.

c) Wildlife / Wild bird – Billy Karesh

Dr Karesh provided an update on the OFFLU wildlife technical activity. In April 2018, during the Brighton OFFLU meeting, a side meeting was organised for the wildlife experts. There was great interest and lot of experts attended this meeting. Many new experts expressed interest in joining the OFFLU wildlife group and this will be taken on board as per needs. Two concept notes on wild bird surveillance were discussed, one focusing on global level and one focusing on Europe. The experts felt the necessary to use these two concepts and produce a larger document that outlines a clear and concise case for continued surveillance and surveillance related research. Efforts are ongoing to develop this larger document.

Dr Karesh proposed Dr Andrew Breed to take over as the new chair of the OFFLU wildlife / wild bird group starting from January 2019. The OFFLU Executive committee members accepted this transition. Dr Breed will work on developing the 1 to 3-year work plan for this technical activity and submit by end of January 2019.

Global Virome project is continuing. The project seeks to significantly expand the scale of targeted viral discovery over a decade-long sampling and laboratory testing period in mammals and the wild bird component is also included. Field work in China and Thailand is expected to start this year.

d) Equine influenza – Ann Cullinane (Gounalan)

Dr Pavade provided an update on the equine influenza TA. A side meeting was organized at the Brighton OFFLU meeting for the EI experts and the group drafted the 1 to 3-year work plan which is available at http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/meeting-reports/pdf/OFFLU_Brighton/Equine_Group_activities_15_Apr.pdf

The next meeting of the equine influenza expert panel meeting to update vaccine recommendations will take place in February/March 2019 at OIE Headquarters.

Action: Nicola Lewis to be the contact point between the three TAs on avian, swine and equine for cross talks on antigenicity related topics.

e) Epidemiology – Dirk Pfeiffer (Cristian)

Dr DeBattisti provided an update on the epidemiology TA. The experts finalized the 1 to 3-year work plan and posted at http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/meeting-reports/pdf/OFFLU_Brighton/OFFLU_AETWG_work_plan.pdf

The experts of this TA provided technical advice on H7N9 and H5N8 risk assessment update.

f) Socio economics – Jonathan (Gounalan)

Dr Pavade provided an update on the socio economics TA. A concept note with terms of reference and list of members was finalized earlier with Dr Rushton as the lead and supported by Dr Peter Daniels. The TA did not start its activity yet. Dr Rushton informed by email that influenza has been included in the plans of the Global Burden of Animal Diseases (GBAD) programme and OFFLU support on the GBAD work will be provided.

Action for all technical activities:

The membership of all technical activities need to be reviewed and collected from the chair of the TA. This membership list will then be endorsed with the Executive Committee and Steering Committee with final endorsement by sharing with the parent organisations (Gounalan)

3. OFFLU WHO VCM

a) Feedback on last VCM (Mia/Cristian)

Dr DeBattisti and Dr Torchetti provided an update on the September 2018 VCM participation to the committees.

The OFFLU post VCM September 2018 report is prepared and posted on the OFFLU website http://www.offlu.net/fileadmin/home/en/human-animal-interface/pdf/OFFLU_POST_VCM_REPORT_2018Nov_.pdf

b) Progress to establish VCM as separate TA and membership (Mia/Cristian)

A concept note proposing OFFLU VCM contribution to WHO as a separate TA was shared with the OFFLU committees with some comments from Dr Torchetti. The Committee suggested the Secretariat to send this version by email to all the members for comments.

Action : The next step is to finalise the concept note with inputs from the Executive Committee on the document and send to Dr Torchetti with list of membership (Gounalan and Mia)

c) OFFLU VCM extension (2019 – 2023) update (Gounalan)

The renewal of the OFFLU-WHO collaboration agreement for the next five years 2019 – 2023 was officially signed by OIE, FAO and WHO after the ToR was mutually updated and agreed between the three focal point organisations involving the technical experts.

d) OFFLU expert representative for the next cycle (for discussion)

The OFFLU committees Chairman asked Dr Mia Torchetti to continue attend the Feb 2019 WHO VCM as the OFFLU expert and a decision will be taken soon for the next representative.

Action: Dr Ian Brown to sign an extension letter extending the period of Dr Mia for the Feb VCM 2019 participation. For the September 2019 VCM, replacement for Mia to be identified and approved (Ian Brown and David Swayne)

4. OFFLU STAR IDAZ animal influenza research agenda update (David/ Ian)

Two updates of the OFFLU research agenda already done. The first version of the research agenda was developed in year 2010. The second version of the research agenda was updated in collaboration with STAR IDAZ in 2014. Since it is four years now from last update, it was decided to look into the document for an update again. Also there is contact from STAR IDAZ to move on this initiative. The Chairs of the SC/EC will form a short list of members to follow up with email discussion and teleconferences using the 2014 version as base document and taking into consideration the WHO zoonotic influenza research agenda. Then all the leads of the OFFLU technical activities will be contacted to examine the 2014 document for inputs and comments. The actual revision committee could include Ian Brown, David Swayne, Nicola Lewis, Marie Culhane, Taki Saito, Billy Karesh, Mary Pantin-Jackwood, David Suarez, Dirk Pfeiffer, Jonathan Rushton, Mia Kim, Gounalan Pavade, Stefano Messori, and Christian DeBattisti. Action items: 1) Set up a TC with Star-IDAZ to establish coordinations on revising the research agenda, 2) Pick a chair and invite OFFLU members to revision committee, 3) TC with revision committee to begin the process

Action: An initial teleconference involving the Chairs of OFFLU SC and EC with STAR-IDAZ to be planned (GP)

5. Update of the influenza A cleavage site document for 2018 (David/ Cristian)

Dr DeBattisti will update the influenza A cleavage site document for the year 2018 and propose the changes in track changes and will send it around the Reference Centres/laboratories.

Action: Update of the influenza A cleavage site document taking into considerations the 2018 outbreaks and circulate to the OIE/FAO Reference Centres for comments (Christian)

6. Redesigning of OFFLU website home page (Gounalan)

The OIE IT unit has approached the Secretariat with the possibility to redesign the OFFLU website. The members of the EC were requested to send ideas/examples to the Secretariat.

Action: A structure/layout of the design will be developed for sharing with the SC and EC for comments. Newer things and documents should be placed at the top of the tab. The OFFLU contributors list and photos to be updated.

7. OFFLU annual report 2018 (Gounalan)

Preparation for the OFFLU annual report 2018 will start by January 2019. The OFFLU Secretariat will contact the members of the technical activities for any inputs and comments. It was suggested to circulate the OFFLU annual report widely more than experts to all stakeholders involving the OIE Delegates/Focal points and FAO network distribution.

Action: To draft and circulate the OFFLU annual report before March 2019 and distribute to all stakeholders of OIE and FAO distribution networks (Gounalan and Christian)

8. Face to face meetings and funding (discussion all)

- a. Face to face next meeting of the OFFLU Steering/Executive Committee meeting: The Chairs of the OFFLU committees may attend the OIE ad hoc group meeting on avian influenza somewhere between February – April 2019. So the OFFLU committee meeting could be considered at that time.
- b. Avian influenza Technical Activities Group Annual Meeting to be planned in later part of 2019. Paris or Rome to be considered for the venue. A detailed concept note with the needed list of participants and funds needed to be developed so that it could be brought to the notice of parent organisations for seeking funds (Ian Brown and Gounalan Pavade).
- c. Swine influenza technical group meeting, 27 – 28 February 2019 planned.
- d. Equine influenza panel expert group meeting, February/March 2019.

The committees emphasized the importance of continuance of funding for OFFLU from the two parent organisations.