

FINAL REPORT



Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram: development of the Control Centres Manual for managing aquatic animal disease emergencies in Queensland

Tiina Hawkesford

January 2004

FRDC Project No. 2003/641



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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

2002/641 Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram: development of the Control Centres Manual for managing aquatic animal disease emergencies in Queensland

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OBJECTIVES:

1. To improve awareness and ownership of Queensland's aquatic animal disease planning and management arrangements among participants, in both the public and private sectors, through development, testing and production of an appropriate derivation of the AQUAVETPLAN Control Centres Management Manual (2001).
2. To ensure conformity to the current 'whole of government' approach to public safety risk management and consistency with Queensland's emergency management legislation and arrangements.
3. To facilitate effective communication and information management in aquatic animal disease emergency operations.
4. To ensure suitability of the product for use in related awareness, training and simulation activities.
5. To identify any inconsistencies and or gaps in the existing AQUAVETPLAN control centres management Manual as they relate to Queensland's situation.

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY:

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

Successful completion of this project has led to improved cooperative and interactive approach to aquatic animal disease emergencies in Queensland. The project has also raised the profile of aquatic animal health within Government Departments in Queensland.

The basis of this project was to take the generic Control Centres Manual produced by a writing group in 2001 and develop it to meet Queensland standards and conditions as per the scope of the original document. The Queensland writing group has incorporated all the relevant aspects of the Queensland version of the AUSVETPLAN manual as well as the fisheries legislation applicable to disease emergency management in Queensland. It is intended that the manual be reviewed on a regular basis hence the titling of this document as Version One.

KEYWORDS: AQUAVETPLAN, emergency management, disease, aquaculture

Acknowledgements

The project leader would like to thank the members of the rewriting team from both QFS and APHS. The author also wishes to thank the people who reviewed the manual and provided constructive comments.

Background

The AQUAVETPLAN Control Centres Manual 2001 was prepared under the Federal Budget Initiative 'Building a National Approach to Animal and Plant Health' announced in May 2000. The Manual's Preface states:-

“this manual must be adapted to local legislative and administrative requirements by each State/Territory jurisdiction responsible for the management of aquatic animal disease emergencies”, and

“State/Territory disease control headquarters, with responsibility for strategic management of the disease outbreak, must be established, and it must ensure that appropriate interdepartmental and interstate relations and communications are in place”.

Queensland has already performed eight training exercises in aquatic animal emergency disease preparedness. These included:

- a State Disease Emergency Headquarters (SDEHQ) and two Tactical Exercises Without Troops (TEWT) (one in the South and one in the North) in 1999.
- two Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) and two field exercises (in the South and in the North) in 2001
- a National LDCC involving the Australasian Fisheries Law Enforcement Conference (AFLEC) in 2002.

The LDCCs and field exercises in 2001 were FRDC Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram funded exercises under the Federal Budget Initiative Project number 2001/660. In all these exercises the AQUAVETPLAN Control Centres Manual was used to base the proceedings, initially, in 1999, when it was still in a draft document. These training exercises served to promote awareness and understanding of the manual. Officers of the Aquatic Animal Health Unit in Canberra facilitated all these exercises.

Need

To effectively deal with aquatic animal disease emergencies in Queensland it is essential to have a control Centres manual that encompasses all the emergency response strategies of the Queensland AUSVETPLAN as well as the fisheries legislation relevant to the management of a disease event. Quarantine and disease management are currently controlled under the *Fisheries Act 1994* although new legislation is being developed and in due course major disease events, both terrestrial and aquatic, will be controlled under the *Biosecurity Act*.

Objectives

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2. To ensure conformity to the current 'whole of government' approach to public safety risk management and consistency with Queensland's emergency management legislation and arrangements.

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Methods

The writing of the Queensland manual was a revision of the 2001 AQUAVETPLAN Control Centres Manual. The aim was to adapt the National AQUAVETPLAN for use in Queensland in the event of an aquatic disease emergency.

Results

The new version of the manual was written with full consultation with Queensland's emergency disease response team.

Some of the changes include but are not limited to:

Volume one

Reporting structure for disease emergency response in Queensland
Revision of the response model
Guidelines for the establishment of LDCC

Volume two - Forms

Event Log
Field Teams – Location
Hired plant/equipment charges
Infected Area Operations
Message Log – IN
Message Log – OUT
Operations log (Type A)
Operations log (Type B)
Resource requests log
Situation Board
Situation Report - LDCC
Situation report - SDCHQ
Task/resource request
Vehicle log sheet
Vehicle record sheet

Benefits and adoption

The major benefit of the project is to produce a collaborative document which includes agreed strategies for a response in the event of an aquatic animal disease emergency, not only in Queensland but elsewhere in Australia as exemplified during Exercise Tethys. The manual is almost identical in format to the Queensland AUSVETPLAN manual, which in turn is similar to the National AUSVETPLAN manual.

The manual was "road tested" during the recent Exercise Tethys and some of the valuable feedback from the 20 "players" has been included in the final version.

Future development

In response to the circulation of the new Queensland Control Centres Manual to interested stakeholders, the aquaculture industry has requested that we run a tabletop simulation exercise so that all the groups can experience first hand the operational side of an aquatic disease emergency response. It is intended to link this exercise to the next meeting of the Queensland Aquaculture Industry Federation's (QAIF) next quarterly meeting.

Planned outcomes

The planned outcome has been with the production of version one of the two-volume manual. The manual will be updated regularly and as documents such as standard operating procedures are developed for aquatic animal emergencies these will be included in volume two.

Conclusion

The project has resulted in the successful development of the Queensland version of the National Control Centres Manual

References

AQUAVETPLAN Control Centres Manual (2001) Australian Government – Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra, Australia

Intellectual Property

There is no intellectual property associated with the development of the manual.

Staff

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