

Contingency Plan for Serious Pest Outbreaks in British Trees

Signatories

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Reviewed by
Review date

Contents

1. Forestry Commission's Objectives
2. Scope
3. Objectives of this Plan
4. Action
5. The Outbreak Management Team
6. Chairperson's responsibilities
7. Investigating officer's responsibilities
8. Communication officer's responsibilities
9. Environmental advisor's role
10. Scientific advisor's responsibilities
11. Secretariat responsibilities
12. General Procedures
13. When to end the emergency action
14. Review

Appendix 1 Outbreak Management Team structure

Appendix 2 Investigation Flowchart

Appendix 3 OMT Contact details

Appendix 4 Contact details of other interested agencies

Appendix 5 Rapid Pest Risk Analysis

Appendix 6 Acronyms used in this plan

Appendix 7 List of specific contingency plans

Generic Pest Contingency Plan

1. Forestry Commission Objectives

- 1.1. The mission of the Forestry Commission (FC) is to protect and expand Britain's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment
- 2.2. The Forestry Commission's Plant Health Service (PHS) operates throughout Great Britain to prevent harmful pests entering GB and the European Union from overseas, and to eradicate or contain any that do become established.
- 3.3. The purpose of this generic contingency plan is to provide an operational framework that will support specific plans and actions taken in pursuit of these objectives.

2. Scope

- 2.1. The procedure outlined in this plan has been developed to facilitate a rapid response to any suspected invertebrate or other pathogen pest outbreak. The relevant legislation is the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 (as amended). The term "tree pest" is used in the sense that it is used in the 2005 Order – that is, a pathogen, or any living organism (other than a vertebrate animal) in any stage of its existence which is injurious or likely to be injurious to any tree or wood (including wood in use), and includes a culture of such pathogen or organism. All such pests fall within the scope of this plan.
- 2.2. This plan will be triggered by an outbreak, defined for this purpose as a recently detected pest population on trees at one or more locations in Great Britain. The discovery of an outbreak may be fortuitous; it may follow routine phytosanitary surveillance procedures or it may follow special surveillance or surveys instigated by an assessment of an imminent threat from a particular pest, but it is more likely to be uncovered by deliberate surveillance. The FC's surveillance and Rapid Pest Risk Analysis Procedures are given in Appendix 5.

3. Objectives of this plan

- 3.1. To ensure that any outbreak of a potentially serious tree pest found in Great Britain is managed consistently and rapidly, firstly to contain and, ultimately, where practicable, to eradicate the pest.
- 3.2. To facilitate a rapid response by making, where relevant, all FC staff aware of this plan.
- 3.3. To identify and provide access to the resources needed for prompt action. In particular to identify the key decision makers and stakeholders (refer to Appendix 1) and to ensure that emergency funds are available.
- 3.4. To inform other relevant government departments i.e. the Food and Environment Research Agency's (Fera) Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), Plant Pests and Diseases and Plant Health Policy Programme Units, Scottish Government (SG), Welsh Assembly Government Plant Health and

Generic Pest Contingency Plan

Biotechnology Department, the private forestry sector, the timber trade (refer to Appendixes 3 and 4 for contact details) and the general public.

3.5. FC Surveillance System

The FC will maintain:

- A cadre of scientific advisors, part of whose job is to collate pest risk information from the scientific literature, conferences and meetings of special advisory bodies constituted under the EPPO and IPPC;
- A PH service that will attend meetings with other PH authorities in the UK and abroad to assess threats;
- A pest awareness programme for FC staff (including FE and FR). The aim is to increase staff vigilance when performing their day-to-day duties.

For high and imminent threats the FC will implement special survey procedures.

4. Action

- 4.1. Initial notification may be received from any source and should be directed to the FC PHS (Appendix 3 for contact details).
- 4.2. Upon notification a preliminary investigation will be conducted under the authority of the FC Plant Health Operations Manager to assess the situation. If an outbreak is suspected a control notice issued under article 31 of the 2005 Order will be served immediately. The notice should, as a minimum, prohibit the removal of any infested material or potentially infested material, including any vehicles or equipment that may be contaminated, from the premises. The Heads of FC Plant Health and FR Centre for Forestry and Climate Change will be notified at once. The Head of FC Plant Health will notify other relevant department heads and convene the Outbreak Management Team (OMT) as necessary.
- 4.3. The Head of FR Centre for Forestry and Climate Change will initiate further investigation. If an outbreak is confirmed a Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (refer to Appendix 5) should be prepared to determine whether phytosanitary measures are justified. If a threat is identified, and no valid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) is available, one must be initiated according to ISPM No.11 *Pest Risk Analysis for Quarantine Pests including Analysis of Environmental Risks and Living Modified Organisms* (FAO, 2004).
- 4.4. If the Rapid Pest Risk Analysis assesses the level of risk as high, the OMT will, in the absence of an existing, pest-specific contingency plan agree an appropriate outbreak management protocol taking account of ISPM 9 (FAO, 1998) *Guidelines for Pest Eradication Programmes*. This may be revised as the results of the full PRA become known. The Head of FC Plant Health will authorise implementation of this procedure and will be responsible for ensuring

Generic Pest Contingency Plan

that all relevant parties are kept informed of any changes to the protocol as the full PRA is developed or procedures reviewed.

- 4.5. Prior to an outbreak, to assess an imminent threat, the FC and/or other departments may have instituted a Management Board. In the event that an outbreak is confirmed, the Head of Plant Health will immediately notify all members of the Management Board and inform them of the action taken and being planned.

5. The Outbreak Management Team (OMT)

- 5.1. Structure (refer to Appendix 1)

The structure and governance of the OMT will depend on the status of the pest in question. This will reflect the seriousness of the outbreak, and whether the pest is a quarantine pest (covering GB) or a non-regulated pest (present in only one or two countries). The Chair of the OMT will reflect this distinction, but for non-regulated pests will normally be from a country liaising closely with the Head of Plant Health. The Chair will be supported by the Head of the Centre for Forestry and Climate Change and with members drawn from other appropriate parts of the FC and external departments and agencies as required.

- 5.2. During the outbreak management period the Head of FC Plant Health or his deputy must be contactable at all times. Contact details are shown in Appendix 3.

- 5.3. OMT responsibilities

- Assessing the level of threat with reference to the Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (Appendix 5) and preparation of a full PRA.
- Establishing the scale and scope of the problem and of the action required to eliminate or contain the outbreak. Particular consideration should be given to environmental issues, disposal of contaminated material and general biosecurity measures.
- Identifying the criteria required to judge when emergency action has either succeeded, or failed and should be abandoned
- Securing funds.
- Mobilising resources.
- Preparing reports.
- Developing and implementing emergency legislation (as appropriate).
- Communications (as appropriate):
 - Ministers
 - European Commission and member States;
 - Other Government Departments;
 - Other Plant Protection Organisations: Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands
- Private forestry sector;

Generic Pest Contingency Plan

- Local stakeholders;
- General public (via Pest Alert and website)
- International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat, European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation.

6. Chairperson's responsibilities

- 6.1. Within the FC, inform the Head of Specialist Advisors and Head of Corporate and Forestry Support Division and Director-General.
- 6.2. Liaise with external bodies e.g. Fera, Natural England, SG, WAG, EA, SEPA, EC, timber trade, etc.
- 6.3. Brief the Executive Board, Commissioners and Ministers.
- 6.4. Prepare a bid for additional GB core funds as required.

7. Investigating officer's responsibilities

- 7.1. Investigate the suspected outbreak according to established protocols.
- 7.2. Commission surveys using FR Technical Support Unit.
- 7.3. Liaise with owners of private land where surveys are considered necessary.
- 7.4. Support the Operations Manager.

8. Communication officer's responsibilities

- 8.1. Prepare briefings and press releases.
- 8.2. Notify industry organisations.
- 8.3. Deal with the media.
- 8.4. Agree single FC spokesperson.

(NB It is essential for FC to be able to give this the highest priority)

9. Environmental advisor's role

- 9.1. Interpret environmental law and provide guidance on the available disposal methods for contaminated material.

10. Scientific advisor's responsibilities

- 10.1. Identify and confirm the presence of a pest.
- 10.2. Conduct or update a Pest Risk Analysis as per ISPM 11.
- 10.3. Help establish the scale and scope of the outbreak.
- 10.4. Ensure laboratory resources are available as necessary and that results are disseminated with a supporting impact assessment.
- 10.5. Advise on the most effective methods for safe disposal of infested material.
- 10.6. Advise on biosecurity measures.
- 10.7. Provide scientific support for policy and media requirements.

Generic Pest Contingency Plan

- 10.8. Assist with the preparation of specific plans.
- 10.9. Liaise with other Plant Health laboratories in UK and abroad, as appropriate.

11. Secretariat responsibilities

- 11.1. Accurately minute all OMT meetings, distribute them promptly, and arrange for posting on the FC website.
- 11.2. Provide other secretarial and administrative resources needed by the OMT and operational team as necessary.

12. General procedures

- 11.3. All pest notifications must be investigated immediately and in accordance with established protocols.
- 11.4. The OMT has authority to make operational decisions, and to secure and use additional funding as necessary.
- 11.5. The OMT must advise the widest possible spectrum of those people and organisations most likely to be affected by the outbreak.
- 11.6. All of the business areas represented within the OMT must keep separate event logs.

12. When to end the emergency action

- 12.1. The OMT may stand down when:
- 12.2. another board or department is set up to handle the outbreak or;
- 12.3. containment and eradication have failed and it is recognised that further phytosanitary action at public expense is no longer justified (a decision that would require the sanction of the Executive Board and Ministers and, where appropriate, amendment or revocation of any legislation, either national or EU). Note that under these circumstances, the OMT may have a brief continuing role in collating advice for dealing with the pest as a forest management problem;
- 12.4. the action has succeeded and the outbreak has been eradicated and/or long-term management procedures are in place;
- 12.5. a 'lessons learned' review has been completed; and
- 12.6. a final report has been prepared.

13. Review

- 13.1. This plan must be reviewed annually to reflect lessons learned and to update contact details as necessary. The secretariat is responsible for convening meetings as appropriate.
- 13.2. C&FS Division will ensure that contact details are reviewed annually.

Appendix 1.

The Outbreak Management Team

Chairperson: Senior FC or FR manager (Quarantine pest outbreak) (For example, the Chief Scientific Advisor)
Normally the country lead or the Head of FC Plant Health (Non-regulated pest outbreak)

Scientific advisor: Head of FR Centre for Forestry and Climate Change, or appropriate scientist

National Offices: Head of FCE, FCW, FCS or delegated deputies as appropriate.

Legal Advisor: Defra legal team

Field operations & finance: FC PH Operations Manager

Investigating Officer: Plant Health Service Regional Manager

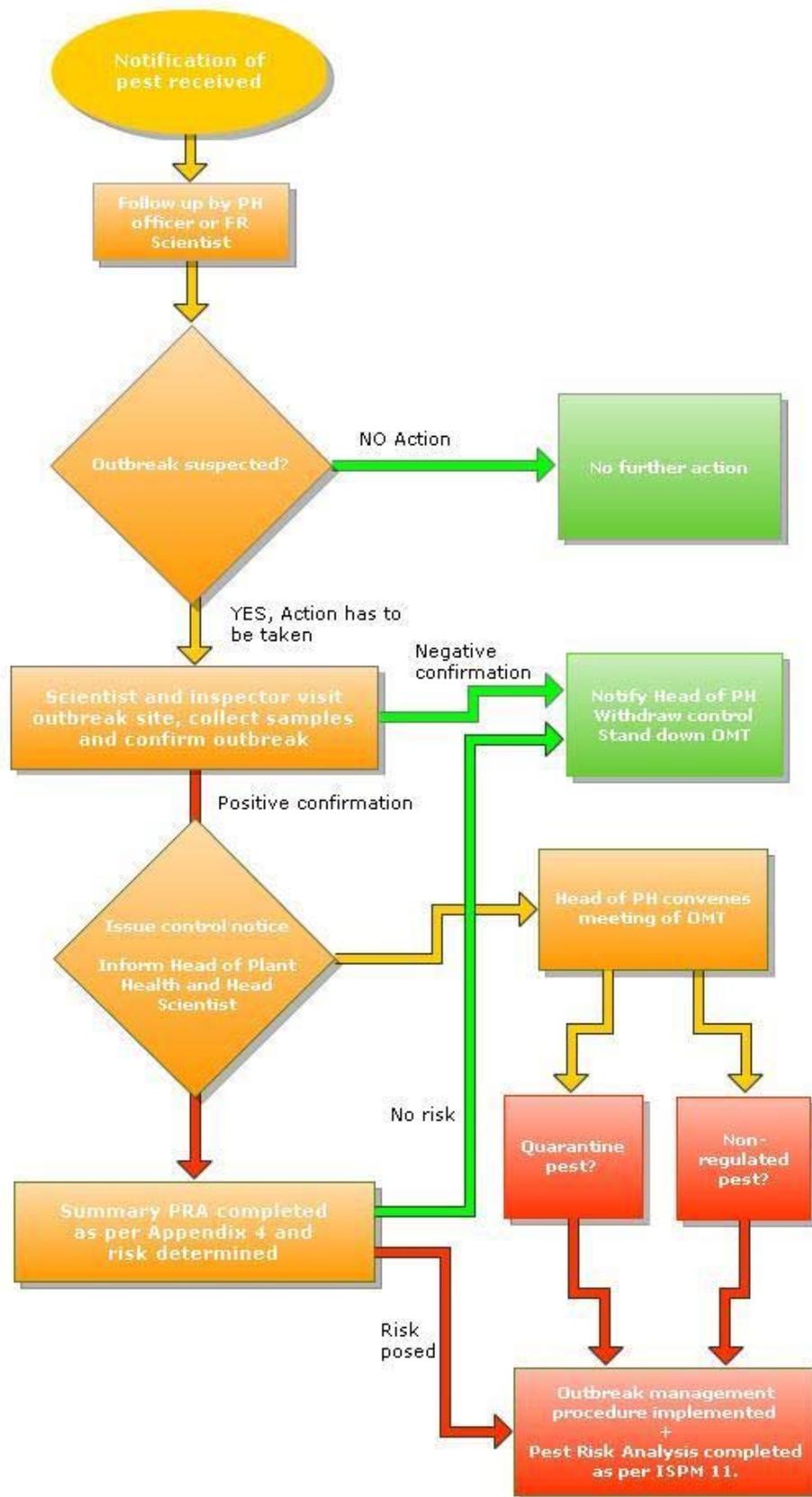
Communications: Head of FC Communications

Environmental Advisor: From SEPA, EA or WAGDRA

Secretariat: Corporate and Forestry Support (C&FS)

Notes: Responsibilities of National Offices

- Secure funding and support in kind if necessary to supplement GB core funding.
- Provide assistance in communication and liaison within countries
- Other staff (internal and external) may be co-opted as necessary e.g. Fera, Finance, Natural England, SGRED, EA, SEPA, WAG Plant Health and Biotechnology Unit.



Appendix 3.

OMT members

Head of FC Plant Health Service	Dr John Morgan
Forest Research - Head of Centre for Forestry & Climate Change	Andy Moffat
Director FC England	Tim Rollinson
Director FC Scotland	Dr Bob McIntosh
Director FC Wales	Trefor Owen
Legal Advisor (Defra)	Eleni Gill
Field Operations & Finance (FC PHS)	Ian Brownlee
Investigating Officer (North)	Ian Murgatroyd
Investigating Officer (South)	Steve Mears
Head of Corporate Communications	Colin Morton
Environmental Advisors	England: tbc Wales: tbc Scotland: tbc

Appendix 4.

Contact details of other interested agencies.

(To be completed by consultees)

Appendix 5.

Rapid Pest Risk Analysis.

This system is intended to facilitate rapid action in the absence of a full PRA.

Factors	Scale of risk	
Number of infected sites	<5 = low	5 or more = high
Risk of rapid spread?	No = low	Yes = high
Monetary value of infected or of potentially affected plants	<£10K = low	>£10K = high
Will the outbreak affect exports?	No = low	Yes = high
Will the pest have a significant environmental / landscape / amenity impact	No = low	Yes = high

It is recommended that if two or more of the factors score highly the outbreak management procedure should be implemented. If only one factor scores highly implementation is at the discretion of the OMT.

Appendix 6.

Acronyms used in this plan

C&FS = Corporate and Forestry Support

EA = Environment Agency (England)

EPPO = European Plant Protection Organisation

FC = Forestry Commission (GB)

Fera = Food and Environment Research Agency

FR = Forest Research (GB)

GB = Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales)

IPPC = International Plant Protection Convention

ISPM = International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures

OMT = Outbreak Management Team

PHS = Plant Health Service (FC)

PHSI = Plant Health Seeds Inspectorate (Fera)

PPO = Plant Protection Organisation

PRA = Pest Risk Analysis

SG = Scottish Government (Policy and Inspectorate)

SEPA = Scottish Environment Protection Agency

WAGDRA = Welsh Assembly Government Department for Rural Affairs

Appendix 7.

Pest-Specific Contingency Plans

1. Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)
2. Oriental chestnut gall wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*)
3. The Pinewood Nematode (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*) and its vector (*Monochamus* spp.)
4. *Choristoneura* spp.
 - Western Spruce Budworm (*Choristoneura occidentalis*);
 - Spruce Budworm (*Choristoneura fumiferana*);
 - Large Aspen tortrix (*Choristoneura conflictana*)
5. Poplar Rust (*Melampsora medusae*)
6. Spruce Witches Broom Rust (*Chrysomyxa arctostaphylli*)
7. The Elm Phloem Necrosis Phytoplasma and its Vector (*Scaphoideus luteolus*)
8. Sweet Chestnut Blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*)
9. Asian Longhorn Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*)
10. Eastern Blackheaded Budworm (*Acleris variana*) and the Western Blackhead Budworm (*Acleris gloverana*)
11. Hemlock Rust (*Melampsora farlowii*)
12. *Cronartium* Spp. (Non-European)
 - Eastern pine gall rust (*Cronartium quercuum*)
 - Chir pine blister rust (*Cronartium himalayense*)
 - Southern fusiform rust (*Cronartium fusiforme*)
 - Sweetfern blister rust (*Cronartium comptoniae*)
 - Comandra blister rust (*Cronartium comandrae*)
 - Stalactiform blister rust (*Cronartium coleosporioides*)
13. The Ips Species
 - Larger Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*)
 - Northern bark beetle (*Ips duplicatus*)
 - Smaller Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips amitinus*)
14. American Dagger Nematode (*Xiphinema americanum sensu lato*)
15. Needle Cast of Japanese Larch (*Mycosphaerella laricis-leptolepidis*)

Appendix 7.

16. The Oriental Chestnut Gall Wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*)
17. The Citrus Longhorn Beetle (*Anoplophora chinensis*)
18. Oak Wilt (*Ceratocystis fagacearum*) and its vectors The Oak Bark Beetle (*Pseudopityophthorus minutissimus* and *P. pruinosis*)
19. Septoria Canker of Poplar (*Mycosphaerella populorum*)
20. Pine Gall Rust (*Endocronartium harknessii*)
21. Pitch Canker of Pine (*Gibberella circinata*)