

**Biosecurity Programme Board Meeting
Silvan House, 4th Floor West Boardroom
Thursday 26th November 2009**

Minutes

Present:

Roger Coppock (CFS Chair)	Richard Siddons (FCW)
Roddie Burgess (CFS)	Laura Jones (FCE)
John Dye (TIMCON)	Joan Webber (FR)
Chris Inglis (ConFor)	Hugh Clayden (FCS)
David Sulman (UKFPA)	Stewart Snape (CFS Secretariat)
Nick Boulton (TTF)	
Jon Heuch (Arboricultural Ass.)	

1. Welcome and Introductions

Roger Coppock welcomed everyone to the meeting. Roger then gave some background information about the increasing importance of biosecurity for UK forestry, trees and woodland.

2. Terms of Reference

Roger introduced the ToR and highlighted that the key objective of the Board was to deliver the Plant Health Strategy. There was a discussion about the wording of the terms of reference. In particular the board agreed that the first and last bullet points should be revised as follows:

- Determination and understanding of the impacts on forestry, trees and woodland;
- Raising the profile, awareness, and understanding of plant health controls and tree health issues amongst all stakeholders including the general public;

HC suggested that under '**Method of Working**' the reference to "interested stakeholders" be revised to "stakeholders".

Action: Roger would revise the ToR accordingly and circulate.

JH asked what an "urban tree" meant. RB explained that under PH legislation there is no clear distinction between what is a forest tree and what isn't. LJ wondered whether FC had asked other government departments about where responsibility (for urban trees) should lie. Apparently, in England, the Department for Communities and Local Government had responsibility at one time but this was no longer the case. The position in Scotland and Wales wasn't clear. Laura also emphasised that if the FC intended to take on responsibility for urban trees then it was essential that we made it clear that we could not take this on unless additional resources were made available. It was also emphasised that we should have a clear rationale for wanting to take responsibility. The board agreed.

3. Forestry Commission Biosecurity Review – Paper 1

RC presented his "Next Steps" paper and invited questions. HC asked about the fourth bullet point under the "Summary of Actions". RB explained that Charlie Greenslade (Head of Plant Health (retired), Scottish Government) had been commissioned to conduct the FC review.

HC commented that it is important to be careful about the language we use when communicating Plant Health issues to stakeholders. He asked for an "idiot's guide" to the EU PH regime. RB said he would provide a link to the Phytosanitary glossary used by the International Plant Protection Convention.

https://www.ippc.int/servlet/BinaryDownloaderServlet/184195_E.do.doc?filename=1241700945859_ISPM_05_2009_E.doc&refID=184195

Action: RB to provide a link to the IPPC glossary. Discharged

**Action: RB to share the Sears natural Scotland Biosecurity control protocol.
Discharged**

4. Present status of current biosecurity issues – Paper 2

RB presented his paper and invited questions. HC asked why Dutch Elm Disease was not listed. RB explained that DED does not fit the definition of a quarantine pest. The legislation had not been revoked because other work had taken priority. CI asked RB about *P. ramorum* in Larch. RB explained that it had been identified in several sites in the West Country in August 2009. Current research is evaluating the threat that *P. ramorum* poses to larch. LJ commented that RB's paper could be developed further and used to give an update to future meetings. The format could adopt a 'traffic light' approach to alert members to areas of high risk.

Action: RB agreed to consider members' suggestions for improving the format.

Action: members to submit suggestions to RB.

Action: RB to revise the spreadsheet and copy an electronic version to members.

5. Key Issues of concern

JD: Explained that the key message is that from the perspective of wood-pallet producers it is vital that care is taken when referring to the risks associated with WPM. Competitors will seek to take full advantage of any negative publicity. RC mentioned that with the publication of the Read Report, Combating Climate Change - A role for UK forests, the report resulting from the National Assessment of UK Forestry and Climate Change, we must take full advantage of the opportunity to publicise the benefits of using wood products. NB commented that in his experience the public is still not aware that felling trees is not necessarily a bad thing. CI commented that if Corsican Pine and Larch were at risk his members would like advice on the alternatives. JH highlighted that from an urban perspective the issue is one of how do we address the fact that in many cities urban planting largely consists of mature monocultures e.g. in London there are many mature London Plane trees that are at risk. This is the main issue that needs to be addressed. NB explained that the main issue from his point of view is the justification for import controls.

6. Current status of FC and FERA funded research

JW gave her presentation and invited questions. RC asked whether the widespread use of chemical controls in tree nurseries might have resulted in some pests developing resistance. JW replied that it may have contributed but the problem was more complicated than that.

7. Communications and wider engagement

RC introduced this topic. There was a consensus that it was important to agree the right form of words for the Communication Strategy. For example LJ expressed concern about the commitment to "take whatever action is necessary".

Action: RC will revisit this and propose a revised form of words.

8. EU review of plant health directive

RB provided an update. HC asked how long member states had to implement any new directive. RB confirmed that six months was the norm.

9. Next steps

RC listed the following:

- Pathways study (Charlie Greenslade). **Action: RB**
- Draft a strategy and circulate in good time for next meeting. **Action: RC**
- Prepare an update on the EU review for next meeting. RB asked the board to confirm how much input they wanted to have into the review process. It was agreed that a watching brief would suffice for now. **Action: RB.**
- RC asked the board to think about options for raising awareness about biosecurity for the next meeting. **Action: All members.**
- Work up a paper on urban trees. **Action: RC**

10. Meeting dates

4th of February 2010 and 15 July 2010.