

AUSVETPLAN GUIDANCE DOCUMENT
DECLARED AREAS AND ALLOCATION OF PREMISES
CLASSIFICATIONS IN AN EAD RESPONSE

Contents

A. Purpose	2
B. Background.....	2
C. Scope	3
D. Reference documents.....	4
E. Introductory notes for the use of this guidance document.....	4
F. Declared areas	5
G. Area definitions for non-vector-borne diseases.....	6
H. Area definitions for vector-borne diseases	8
I. Phases of allocation of premises classification	9
J. Guidelines for reclassifying previously declared areas (RAs and CAs)	11
K. Possible flow of premises classifications over the course of an emergency animal disease event	12
L. Qualifiers	18
M. Premises numbers	20
Appendix 1: Definition of premises classifications and qualifiers in an emergency animal disease response.....	22
Appendix 2: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a restricted area.....	24
Appendix 3: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a control area	25

A. Purpose

This guidance document has been developed to assist personnel involved in an emergency animal disease (EAD) incident to determine premises allocations and define declared areas. It may also be used for EAD training purposes.

B. Background

Effective responses to EAD incidents require planning at national, state/territory and district levels, and the involvement of animal health authorities, the livestock industries and emergency management organisations. The Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA)¹ is a contractual arrangement that brings together the Australian, state and territory governments, livestock industry groups, and Animal Health Australia to significantly increase Australia's capacity to prepare for, and respond to, EAD incursions.

For each disease listed in the EADRA, there is an agreed approach to an incident. These approaches have been developed and agreed upon by governments and relevant industries in 'peacetime' — that is, before any EAD incident. They are captured in the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan² (AUSVETPLAN) disease strategies and response policy briefs.

AUSVETPLAN currently comprises a Summary Document,³ disease strategies for EADs, response policy briefs for diseases that do not have a full disease strategy, operational manuals, enterprise manuals, management manuals, and resource and guidance documents. At any one time, several of these manuals are under review to ensure that the information they contain is up to date.

The availability of agreed AUSVETPLAN disease strategies ensures that informed decisions about the policies and procedures needed to manage an EAD incident in Australia are immediately at hand, and no time is lost in mounting the response. AUSVETPLAN disease strategies provide the suggested starting policy and guidelines for agencies and organisations involved in a response to an incident. Although AUSVETPLAN disease strategies are referred to throughout the duration of a response, their primary function is to assist jurisdictions, during the first week of a response, to prepare the initial EAD Response Plan (as required under the EADRA). AUSVETPLAN disease strategies need to provide adequate guidance, but ensure enough flexibility to allow a combat jurisdiction to modify the response at the later

¹ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ead-response-agreement

² www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ausvetplan

³ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/AUSVETPLAN-Summary-Document.pdf — currently (14 August 2013) under review

stages of an incident, as more information and greater clarity about the epidemiology of the incident become available.

In an EAD event, quarantine and movement controls must strike a balance between quick and effective disease control and business continuity. Therefore, it is not appropriate to simply prohibit all movement of animals and products. On the other hand, diligence needs to be applied to minimise the risk of further spread of the disease. In the early phases of a response, declared areas and premises classifications are focused on disease control, but they also play a key role in the management of surveillance and in reporting.

Recommended quarantine and movement controls in each AUSVETPLAN disease strategy provide guidance on which movements can be allowed and under what conditions. This should be based on an assessment of the disease risks that are presented by a specific movement, of a specific commodity, at a specific time during the EAD response phase.

The risk assessment should take into account current business practices, rather than theoretical movements.

The definitions and information in this guidance document are to be used by EAD response personnel when determining movements within and between declared areas and premises.

C. Scope

The scope of this guidance document includes:

- describing declared areas and how they are defined, implemented and removed
- describing other types of nondeclared areas used for disease control purposes
- describing the process whereby premises classifications are allocated
- describing the flow of the transition of premises classifications from one status to another, as an EAD response unfolds
- defining specific classifications to be used as generic text in all future AUSVETPLAN edition 4 manuals and glossary
- providing guidance and information for training purposes.

This guidance document is primarily for responses for which a Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Disease (CCEAD) has been convened and cost sharing is possibly involved. It can, however, be used by jurisdictions for any other animal disease incident, noting that consultation with the CCEAD is relevant only where the CCEAD is involved in the response.

D. Reference documents

- The current version of the relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy.⁴

E. Introductory notes for the use of this guidance document

For the purposes of this guidance document, the term animal means livestock (production animals), wild (including feral) animals and domesticated animals. It does not include humans.

Declared areas are areas declared under jurisdictional legislation. They include a restricted area (RA), which is subject to strict disease control measures, and a control area (CA), which is a disease-free buffer between the RA and the parts of Australia that are free of disease (the outside area — OA).

All premises within the declared areas are subject to classification for disease control management and monitoring purposes.

A particular property (or premises) must fit clearly into **only one** premises classification at a given time. The classifications and their abbreviations are (in alphabetical order):

- approved processing facility (APF)
- at-risk premises (ARP)
- dangerous contact premises (DCP)
- dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF)
- infected premises (IP)
- premises of relevance (POR)
- resolved premises (RP)
- suspect premises (SP)
- trace premises (TP)
- unknown status premises (UP)
- zero susceptible species premises (ZP).

In addition to these premises definitions, the following ‘qualifiers’ may be used to describe the outcome of a recent investigation, epidemiological risk assessment or other activity on premises:

- assessed negative (AN)
- vaccinated (VN).

⁴ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ausvetplan/disease-strategies

For example, an ARP that has been determined by the relevant authority as being 'assessed negative' should be recorded as 'ARP-AN'.⁵

Definitions of the premises classifications and qualifiers are in Appendix 1.

Based on the disease risk they present, the highest priorities for investigations are IPs, SPs, DCPs and TPs.

Not all classifications may be needed in a particular EAD response.

Classification of premises provides a framework for authorities to exercise legal powers over such premises and to facilitate product tracking, and serves as a communication tool for reporting nationally and internationally on progress in the response.

This guidance document has an emphasis on control measures required for highly contagious diseases, such as equine influenza and foot-and-mouth disease. Declared areas may not be used at all and/or premises classifications may need to be modified for diseases that are not in this category (eg Hendra virus, anthrax and Australian bat lyssavirus). Disease control measures are described in the applicable AUSVETPLAN disease strategy or response policy brief.

F. Declared areas

'A defined tract of land that is subjected to disease control restrictions under emergency animal disease legislation. There are two types of declared areas: restricted area and control area.'

Declared areas are risk based, with several areas or premises of higher risk nested within areas of lower risk. There are only two types of legally declared area: restricted area and control area.

All declared areas need to be clearly identified and easily understood, so that all affected parties can recognise which area they are in, and what regulations and control measures are applicable to them.

Declared areas are declared by a chief veterinary officer (CVO) or their delegate, or a ministerial declaration, according to the appropriate legislation of the states and territories involved.

⁵ Some jurisdictions might have a date associated with the 'assessed negative' qualifier.

G. Area definitions for non-vector-borne diseases

Restricted area (RA)

‘A relatively small legally declared area around infected premises and dangerous contact premises that is subject to disease controls, including intense surveillance and movement controls.’

A restricted area (RA) will be a relatively small declared area⁶ (compared with a control area — see below) drawn with at least ‘x’ km radius⁷ around all IPs and DCPs, and including as many SPs, TP and DCPFs as practicable. Based on risk assessment, the RA is subject to intense surveillance and movement controls. The purpose of the RA is to minimise the spread of the EAD. The RA does not need to be circular but can have an irregular perimeter, provided that the boundary is initially an appropriate distance from the nearest IP, DCP, DCPF, SP or TP. Multiple RAs may exist within one control area.

The boundaries will be modified as new information becomes available, including from an official surveillance program. The actual distance in any one direction will be determined by factors such as terrain, the pattern of livestock movements, livestock concentrations, the weather (including prevailing winds), the distribution and movements of relevant wild (including feral) animals, and known characteristics of the disease agent. In practice, major geographic features and landmarks, such as rivers, mountains, highways and roads, are frequently used to demarcate the boundaries of the RA. Although it would be convenient to declare the RA on the basis of local government areas, this may not be practical, as such areas can be larger than the particular circumstances require.

Control area (CA)

‘A legally declared area where the disease controls, including surveillance and movement controls, applied are of lesser intensity than those in a restricted area (the limits of a control area and the conditions applying to it can be varied during an incident according to need).’

A control area (CA) is a disease-free buffer between the RA and the outside area (see below). Specific movement controls and surveillance strategies will be applied within the CA to maintain its disease-free status and prevent spread of the disease into the outside area.

⁶ As defined under relevant jurisdictional legislation

⁷ For specific details, refer to the relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy, www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ausvetplan

An additional purpose of the CA is to control movement of susceptible livestock for as long as is necessary to complete tracing and epidemiological studies, to identify risk factors and forward and backward risk(s).

The CA will be a larger declared area around the RA(s) — initially, possibly as large as the state or territory in which the incident occurs — where restrictions will reduce the risk of disease spreading from the RA(s). The CA will have a minimum radius of ‘y’ kilometres,⁸ encompassing the RA(s). It may be defined according to geography, climate and the distribution of relevant wild (including feral) animals. The boundary will be adjusted as confidence about the extent and distribution of the incident increases.

In general, surveillance and movement controls will be less intense in the CA than in the RA, and disease-susceptible animals and their products may be permitted to move under permit within and from the area.

Outside area (OA)

‘The area of Australia outside the declared (control and restricted) areas.’

The outside area (OA) is **not** a declared area but is used to describe the rest of Australia outside the declared areas. The OA will be subject to surveillance. Because it is highly desirable to maintain the OA as ‘disease free’, the movement of animals and commodities from the RA and CA into the OA will be restricted.

The OA will also be of interest for ‘zoning’⁹ and ‘compartmentalisation’¹⁰ for purposes of trade access, as well as for disease control (see below).

OIE zoning/compartmentalisation considerations

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* sets the international standards for an OIE-listed disease (in the relevant OIE Terrestrial Code disease chapter), and gives guidance on zoning and compartmentalisation (Chapter 4.3),¹¹ if appropriate to that disease. Under OIE guidelines, zoning offers the opportunity to divide an infected country into zones with different disease statuses, to facilitate trade. Compartmentalisation allows differentiation between enterprises

⁸ For specific details, refer to the relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy, www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ausvetplan

⁹ The process of defining, implementing and maintaining disease-free and infected areas, in accordance with OIE standards. Zoning is based on geopolitical and/or physical boundaries and surveillance, in order to facilitate disease control and/or trade.

¹⁰ The process of defining, implementing and maintaining one or more disease-free establishments, under a common biosecurity management system, in accordance with OIE standards. Compartmentalisation is based on applied biosecurity measures and surveillance, in order to facilitate disease control and/or trade.

¹¹ www.oie.int/international-standard-setting/terrestrial-code/access-online

with different disease statuses based on enterprise biosecurity and management practices.

Once the extent of the incident has been defined, consideration will be given to declaring the rest of Australia free from the disease, based on zoning and/or compartmentalisation.

Any claim for freedom will need to comply with OIE standards and be accepted by trading partners for the resumption of trade.

Other types of areas

It is possible that other types of areas (eg vaccination area or surveillance area), which are not legally declared, may be used for disease control purposes in some jurisdictions.

H. Area definitions for vector-borne diseases

Transmission area (TA)

‘An area, not legally declared, that is used for vector-borne¹² diseases for epidemiological purposes, recognising that vectors are not confined by property boundaries. It includes IPs and, where possible, SPs, TPs, DCPs and DCPFs. A transmission area is subject to an increased level of surveillance, and has movement controls appropriate to its associated restricted area.’

Vector-borne diseases differ from non-vector-borne infectious diseases in that vectors cannot be contained by boundary fences. The transmission area (TA) is thus less concerned with property boundaries or definitions and more with including all infected vectors in the area surrounding known areas of transmission. It will be drawn around known sources of transmission, as evidenced by disease, seroconversion, trapping of infected vectors and any other confirmation of active disease transmission. There may be insufficient information at the start of a response to identify a TA, and an RA may be put in place before a TA can be determined.

A TA is not a legally declared area but will include all IPs and, where possible, all SPs, TPs, DCPs and DCPFs. In the presence of competent vectors, a TA of ‘x’ km¹³ radius should be drawn. The TA does not need to be circular but can have an irregular perimeter, provided that the boundary is initially an appropriate distance from the nearest IP, DCP, DCPF, SP or TP. This distance will depend on the information gained

¹² In most cases, a TA is focused on insect (arthropod) vectors.

¹³ For specific details, refer to the relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy, www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/programs/emergency-animal-disease-preparedness/ausvetplan

about vector numbers and competence, environmental factors (eg prevailing winds, rainfall, temperature, humidity), and the number and distribution of infected and/or susceptible animals. In the absence of competent vectors, the TA may be reduced in size.

Restricted area (RA)

Refer also to the definition of restricted area in Part G.

An RA will be a larger legally declared area around the TA. The boundary of the RA does not have to be circular or parallel to that of the TA but should be at least 'y' km from the boundary of the TA; this distance may be influenced by OIE standards or an official control program. The RA can include areas of known competent vector distribution. In general, surveillance may be less intense than in the TA, but movement controls will be the same.

The boundary of the RA will be adjusted as confidence about the extent of the incident increases. It will take into account the relevant OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* chapter on the disease and, if appropriate, OIE standards on zoning and compartmentalisation (Chapter 4.3¹⁴).

Control area (CA)

Refer to the definition and description of control area in Part G.

There may be competent vectors in the CA, and this needs to be considered when developing movement controls between the RA and the CA.

Outside area (OA)

Refer to the definition and description of outside area in Part G.

OIE zoning/compartmentalisation considerations

Refer to the similar section in Part G.

Other types of areas

Refer to the similar section in Part G.

I. Phases of allocation of premises classification

When an EAD incident is first suspected, the premises involved would undergo a clinical and/or epidemiological investigation. If the case definition,¹⁵ as defined in the

¹⁴ www.oie.int/international-standard-setting/terrestrial-code/access-online

¹⁵ The initial IP will be declared when the initial case definition is met. As the response proceeds and the epidemiology of the incident becomes clearer, it is likely that the initial case definition will need to be replaced by an amended response case definition(s) (eg presumptive diagnosis on clinical signs alone for highly

relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy, is met¹⁶ (ie the index case¹⁷), the relevant CVO or their delegate will determine the premises classification and may declare the premises an IP.

After the identification of the first IP, an RA and a CA may be declared.¹⁸ A TA may also be defined, if appropriate. All premises within these declared areas will be classified. At the beginning of an EAD incident, the initial premises classifications would be infected premises (IP), at-risk premises (ARP), premises of relevance (POR), unknown status premises (UP) and zero susceptible species premises (ZP).

Any premises within the RA or CA will have only one classification at any one time. After an epidemiological investigation, clinical assessment, risk assessment or completion of control measures, a premises may be reclassified.

Once the first IP has been identified, intelligence gathering through veterinary epidemiological investigations would quickly lead to the identification of SPs and TPs. These would be high priorities for follow-up investigation by the relevant state or territory authorities. In a worst-case scenario, an SP could become an IP; therefore, SPs need to be investigated as a matter of very high priority. Similarly, investigation and risk assessment of a TP might identify it as an IP, DCP or DCPF. Both an SP and a TP might also be assessed as negative and reclassified as SP-AN and TP-AN, and eventually as an ARP, POR or ZP.

All premises classifications are subject to change as a result of a modification in the case definition(s) or investigation(s) as the incident response proceeds.

Classifications should be applied with information needs of managers in mind. They should assist managers to monitor and report progress. Premises classifications to be used should be agreed early in a response, so that control centre personnel can apply the correct and consistent classifications and definitions from the outset of the investigation and response.

contagious diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease and equine influenza), which would form the basis for the declaration of subsequent IPs.

¹⁶ Note that case definitions are under development for some manuals and also that some diseases could be present without showing clinical signs.

¹⁷ The first case to come to the attention of investigators

¹⁸ This is invariably the case with highly contagious diseases (eg foot-and-mouth disease, equine/avian/swine influenza, classical swine fever) but may not apply to less contagious diseases (eg Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus).

J. Guidelines for reclassifying previously declared areas (RAs and CAs)

Maintaining movement restrictions on areas for long periods has important implications for resource management, animal welfare, business continuity, and socioeconomic impacts on producers and regional communities.

During the course of an EAD response, it may become necessary for a CA or RA to be expanded, as additional geographical areas or new foci of infection are identified. Later in the response, as control is achieved, mechanisms for gradually reducing the size of the CA and RA can be introduced.

An EAD may involve multiple foci of infection, with several jurisdictions potentially involved. Since disease might be controlled at different rates in different areas, there may be the opportunity to progressively lift restrictions on an area basis. This would involve reclassifying previously declared areas (RAs and CAs), with a staged approach to lifting of movement restrictions. This is a key step in the recovery process and will have positive benefits on the community.

The lifting of restrictions in declared areas is managed by jurisdictions according to their local legislation, regulations and processes.

The key principles for reclassifying a previously declared area during a response should include the following, noting that not all will be relevant for some diseases:

- The area should be epidemiologically distinct from other declared areas.
- All TPs and SPs have been investigated and reclassified, and all IPs, DCPs and DCPFs in the area have been reclassified as RPs.
- All tracing and surveillance associated with EAD control has been completed satisfactorily, with no evidence or suspicion of infection in the area.
- A minimum period of 'x' days¹⁹ has elapsed since pre-determined disease control activities and risk assessment were completed on the last IP or DCP in the area.
- An approved surveillance program (including the use of sentinel animals, if appropriate) has confirmed no evidence of infection in the RA (see below).
- For vector-borne diseases, vector monitoring and absence of transmission studies indicate that vectors are not active.

Lifting of restrictions is a process managed by the combat CVO under jurisdictional legislation and consistent with the most current agreed Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan (EADRP). When the appropriate conditions are satisfied, a combat jurisdiction can, in consultation with the CCEAD, reduce the size of the RA or lift all

¹⁹ The minimum period uses, or is based on, the disease-specific incubation periods defined by the OIE — two incubation periods is a common guideline.

restrictions. The previous part of the RA would then become part of the CA. Jurisdictions should be able to present documented evidence that the appropriate conditions have been met.

When an RA is lifted and becomes part of the CA, it will have a lower risk status, and the movement restrictions that apply will be consistent with those applying within the CA. Over time, all of the RAs will be reduced and lifted.

If there is more than one combat jurisdiction involved, each will use its own appropriate legal jurisdictional mechanisms to lift the declaration of the RA or CA, coordinating with each other and consulting with the CCEAD to ensure wide communication and coordination.

After a further period of surveillance and monitoring, and provided that the additional surveillance and monitoring find no evidence of infection, a jurisdiction, in consultation with the CCEAD, could lift the CA. This would result in the lifting of all the remaining regulatory controls associated with the response, and a return to business as usual.

K. Possible flow of premises classifications over the course of an emergency animal disease event

These definitions and descriptions should be read together with:

- Appendix 1: Definition of premises classifications and qualifiers in an emergency animal disease response
- Appendix 2: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a restricted area
- Appendix 3: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a control area.

Note that the flowcharts represent how a particular premises may be reclassified over the course of a response over time and do not represent the relationship between premises at any one time.

Note that this document has an emphasis on control measures required for highly contagious diseases, such as equine influenza and foot-and-mouth disease.

Procedures for declared areas may not be used at all, and/or premises classification may need to be modified for diseases that are not in this category (eg Hendra virus, anthrax and Australian bat lyssavirus).

Infected premises (IP)

‘A defined area (which may be all or part of a property) on which animals meeting the case definition are or were present, or the causative agent of the emergency animal disease is present, or there is a reasonable suspicion that either is present, and that the relevant chief veterinary officer or their delegate has declared to be an infected premises.’

A premises with susceptible animals that have met the case definition will be declared an IP. For most diseases, the RA(s) will include **all** IPs.

For most diseases, the classification of a premises as an IP would be followed by the declaration of the areas around it as an RA and a CA.²⁰ In the case of vector-borne diseases, a TA may also be identified, if required.

Depending on the situation, control measures in accordance with the agreed EADRP²¹ or the relevant AUSVETPLAN disease strategy or response policy brief may be applied immediately, or may await the outcomes of further investigation of the IP.

When the required control measures for an IP have been completed, the premises would be classified as an RP. After further risk assessment, it may be reclassified as:

- a ZP, if destocked
- an ARP-VN, if not destocked, and vaccinated
- an ARP-AN, if neither destocked nor vaccinated.

If a premises has been classified as an IP on the basis of clinical signs as per the case definition,²² and subsequently both the EAD and the causative agent are confirmed as absent (ie a ‘false’ declaration), the premises would be reclassified as an RP. Thereafter, depending on the specific disease and its epidemiology, it would be reclassified as a ZP or ARP (the qualifiers AN and/or VN may also be used, depending on the actions taken on the premises).

²⁰ Less contagious diseases (eg Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus) do not use declared areas as part of their control measures. See the applicable AUSVETPLAN disease strategies or response policy briefs for details.

²¹ An EADRP will usually be prepared for consideration at the first CCEAD meeting, at the start of a disease response.

²² During the early phase of an EAD response, a comprehensive ‘initial case definition’ is used — eg individual and herd clinical signs, epidemiological investigation and risk assessment, and laboratory evaluation. Later in the response, the ‘response case definition’ may be used, which may be only clinical signs and on-site clinical assessment.

Suspect premises (SP)

‘Temporary classification of a premises that contains a susceptible animal(s) not known to have been exposed to the disease agent but showing clinical signs similar to the case definition, and that therefore requires investigation(s).’

For most diseases, the RA should include as many SPs as practical. Every effort should be made to investigate and reclassify an SP as soon as possible. SPs are considered a very high priority for veterinary investigations. The investigation and risk assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- If the case definition is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP.
- If the case definition is not confirmed but suspicion remains, the premises would continue to be classified as an SP, until further investigation determines its reclassification.
- If the case definition is ruled out, the premises would be given the qualifier assessed negative (AN). If it is located in the RA, it would then be reclassified as an ARP with the qualifier AN (ARP-AN). If it is located in the CA, it would be classified as a POR with the qualifier AN (POR-AN).

Trace premises (TP)

‘Temporary classification of a premises that contains a susceptible animal(s) that tracing indicates may have been exposed to the disease agent, or contains contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires investigation(s).’

For most diseases, the RA should include as many TPs as practical. Every effort should be made to investigate and reclassify a TP as soon as possible. Exposure may occur from animal movements, contaminated material, vehicles, equipment and fomites, as well as via aerosol, especially if the premises is contiguous with an IP. The investigation and an epidemiological assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- If the case definition is met, the premises would be classified as an IP.
- If it appears highly likely that the disease is present and that the TP is highly likely to contain an infected animal(s) or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, even though there are no visible clinical signs, the premises would be classified as a DCP or a DCPF.
- If the investigation shows no evidence of the EAD, the premises would be assessed as negative. If it is located in the RA and there are susceptible animals remaining, it would then be reclassified as an ARP with the qualifier AN (ARP-AN). If it is located in the CA, it would be classified as a POR with the qualifier AN (POR-AN).

- If the tracing investigation reveals no susceptible animals or risk products, wastes or things on the destination premises, a TP may be reclassified as a ZP.

Dangerous contact premises (DCP)

‘A premises, apart from an abattoir, knackery or milk processing plant (or other such facility) that, after investigation and based on a risk assessment, is considered to contain a susceptible animal(s) not showing clinical signs, but considered highly likely to contain an infected animal(s) and/or contaminated animal products, wastes or things that present an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, and that therefore requires action to address the risk.’

During the initial phase of a response, the RA should contain all the DCPs. As the incident develops, epidemiological investigation and tracing from IPs, SPs and TPs within the RA could identify DCPs that are sufficiently distant that they are outside the existing RAs and within the CA. This could trigger an extension of the RA to include them. However, it may prove impractical to extend an RA if the DCP is sufficiently distant from the existing RA. The trigger to declare a separate RA would be the identification of an IP. A DCP on its own does not trigger an RA. In these cases, it is possible that a DCP would be situated within a CA.

Whether an RA is drawn around a DCP depends on whether the transmission risk can be contained on the premises using premises-specific measures, or whether there is a need for RA measures to be applied as well, involving surrounding properties in heightened surveillance and tighter movement controls. The characteristics of the disease and its behaviour will be the major determinant. The risk assessment would consider these, as well as the stage of the response, the animal(s) present and the local situation.

Although susceptible animals on such premises are not showing clinical signs, they are considered to have been significantly exposed to the disease agent — this might be via an infected animal(s); a vector; contaminated animal products, wastes or things; or another transmission mechanism. If susceptible animals on a premises were exhibiting clinical signs that were similar to the case definition, the premises must be classified as an SP.

Since a DCP presents an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, such premises are subjected to appropriate control measures, including ongoing epidemiological monitoring, risk assessment and investigation as required. Monitoring, risk assessment or investigation of a DCP may produce the following outcomes:

- If the presence of an infected animal or contaminated animal products, wastes or things is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP.

- If their presence is not confirmed but the likelihood is considered to remain high, the premises would continue to be classified as a DCP until completion of control measures enables it to be reclassified as an RP. A subsequent risk assessment would allow it to be reclassified as an ARP with an AN qualifier. If animals had been vaccinated as part of the control measures, the premises may also have the qualifier VN.
- If it is considered unlikely that an infected animal or contaminated animal products, wastes or things are present, the premises would be assessed as negative (DCP-AN). If it is located in the RA, it would then be reclassified as an ARP with the qualifier AN. If it is located in the CA, it would be classified as a POR with the qualifier AN.

Once the control measures are completed, the DCP will be reclassified as an RP.

Dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF)

‘An abattoir, knackery, milk processing plant or other such facility that, based on a risk assessment, appears highly likely to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires action to address the risk.’

Particularly for DCPFs, classification provides authorities with a framework for the exercise of legal powers over the premises and to facilitate product tracking, and serves as a communication tool for reporting nationally and internationally on progress in the response.

Since a DCPF presents an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, such premises are subjected to appropriate control measures, including ongoing epidemiological monitoring, risk assessment and investigation as required. Monitoring, risk assessment and investigation of a DCPF may produce the following outcomes:

- If the presence of an infected animal or contaminated animal products, wastes or things is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP.
- If their presence is not confirmed but the likelihood is considered to remain high, the premises would continue to be classified as a DCPF until completion of control measures enables it to be reclassified as an RP. A subsequent risk assessment may allow it to be reclassified as an approved processing facility (APF), if increased biosecurity measures are maintained.
- If it is considered unlikely that an infected animal or contaminated animal products, wastes or things are present, the premises would be assessed as negative (DCPF-AN). It may then be reclassified as an APF, if increased biosecurity measures are maintained.

Once the control measures are completed, the DCPF will be reclassified as an RP.

If, as part of disease control management, a DCPF is used to slaughter suspect or infected animals, it will be reclassified as an IP until it meets the definition for an APF or ZP.

Approved processing facility (APF)

'An abattoir, knackery, milk processing plant or other such facility that maintains increased biosecurity standards. Such a facility could have animals or animal products introduced from lower risk premises under a permit for processing to an approved standard.'

Before being classified as an APF, the premises is assessed to confirm that it has not received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and is operating according to agreed biosecurity standards.

If, during the course of a response, the premises is suspected to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, it will be reclassified as a DCPF pending further investigation.

At-risk premises (ARP)

'A premises in a restricted area that contains a live susceptible animal(s) but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, dangerous contact premises, dangerous contact processing facility, suspect premises or trace premises.'

The animal(s) on such premises are subject to disease control procedures, such as regular surveillance and movement restrictions, that are appropriate to the RA.

Premises of relevance (POR)

'A premises in a control area that contains a live susceptible animal(s) but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, suspect premises, trace premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facility.'

The animal(s) on such premises are subject to disease control procedures, such as heightened surveillance and movement restrictions, that are appropriate to the CA.

Resolved premises (RP)

'An infected premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facility that has completed the required control measures and is subject to the procedures and restrictions appropriate to the area in which it is located.'

Later in a response, as control measures on IPs, DCPs and DCPFs are completed, the premises are reclassified to RP, and their risk status is progressively reviewed.

After appropriate investigation and risk assessment, an RP will become an ARP, POR, ZP or APF.

Unknown status premises (UP)

‘A premises within a declared area where the current presence of susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things is unknown.’

If an investigation and epidemiological risk assessment on a UP confirmed:

- the presence of an infected animal or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, the premises would be classified as an IP
- that it contained no susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things, the UP would be reclassified as a ZP
- the presence of susceptible animals and excluded the presence of an EAD or the causative agent of the EAD, the UP would be reclassified as an ARP if in the RA, or a POR if in the CA
- clinical signs similar to the case definition, the UP would be reclassified as an SP
- an epidemiological link to a risk premises, the UP would become a TP
- a high-risk epidemiological link but without clinical signs of an EAD, the UP would be reclassified as a DCP or DCPF.

Zero susceptible species premises (ZP)

‘A premises that does not contain any susceptible animals or risk products, wastes or things.’

L. Qualifiers

Assessed negative (AN)

AN is a qualifier that may be applied to ARPs, PORs and premises previously defined as SPs, TPs, DCPs or DCPFs that have undergone an epidemiological and/or laboratory assessment and have been cleared of suspicion at the time of classification, and can progress to another status. The animals on such premises are subject to the procedures and movement restrictions appropriate to the declared area (RA or CA) in which the premises is located.

This classification is a description to document progress in the response and in the proof-of-freedom phase. The AN qualifier is a temporary status and only valid at the time it is applied. The time that the AN qualifier remains active will depend on the circumstances and will be decided by the jurisdiction. One day is considered a reasonable guideline. The AN qualifier should also provide a trigger for future surveillance activity to regularly review, and change or confirm, a premises status.

The AN qualifier can also function as a counting tool to provide quantitative evidence of progress, to inform situation reports in control centres during a response. It provides a monitor for very high-priority premises (SPs and TP) as they undergo investigations and risk assessment, and are reclassified, as well as a measure of surveillance activity overall for ARPs and PORs.

The AN qualifier can be applied in a number of ways, depending on the objectives and processes within control centres. The history of each premises throughout the response is held in the information system; the application of the AN qualifier is determined by the jurisdiction, the response needs and the specific processes to be followed in a local control centre.

Vaccinated (VN)

The VN qualifier can be applied in a number of different ways.

At its most basic level, it can be used to identify premises that contain susceptible animals that have been vaccinated against the EAD in question.

However, depending on the legislation, objectives and processes within a jurisdiction, the VN qualifier may be used to track a range of criteria and parameters. The details would need to be developed and tailored to meet individual needs of jurisdictions and circumstances.

Some of the issues that could be included for consideration are detailed below.

i) Definition and monitoring of vaccination

The vaccination status of a population of animals or premises might be important when considering movement controls.

For the purposes of AUSVETPLAN, the following guidance should be followed.

To be referred to as a vaccinated population, the population must have been vaccinated in accordance with:

- the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) registered label particulars, or
- APVMA-approved permit instructions relating to an approved EADRP for off-label use or use of an unregistered immunobiological product(s), or
- instructions of the relevant CVO.

ii) Monitoring vaccination programs

A mechanism for recording and monitoring primary and booster vaccinations for all vaccinated animals should be part of the disease control monitoring system, to provide information on the control of the outbreak as well as evidence for proof of

freedom. For example, jurisdictions may choose to add numbers to the qualifiers to indicate primary (VN1) or booster (VN2) vaccinations.

iii) Incomplete vaccination programs

Vaccination programs during emergency responses are not always completed by the time a response is terminated. Therefore, there may be populations of animals present in the proof-of-freedom phase that are only partially vaccinated and will need to be accounted for, particularly if serology is used for proof of freedom.

iv) Vaccination records and identification of vaccinated animals

The key requirement in an EAD response in which vaccine is used will be to identify vaccinated animals (fully or partially) so they can be disposed of or tested in the proof-of-freedom phase. Records of the number of doses administered and their timing can be kept to identify fully vaccinated premises and premises that have not completed the planned vaccination program (partially vaccinated) or are overdue for booster vaccinations.

In cattle, the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) can record the animals vaccinated. For other species, the NLIS still relies on mob identification. Where appropriate, individual animal identification by means other than NLIS (eg individual animal management tags, microchips [radio-frequency identification], collars) may be necessary.

M. Premises numbers

The combat jurisdiction and, specifically, the local control centre (LCC) are responsible for allocating premises numbers, and classifying and reclassifying premises. A premises number is allocated to all premises within RAs and CAs, as each premises is subjected to surveillance, tracing and epidemiological investigations.

Once allocated, the premises number remains associated with that premises for the duration of the response as the premises is subjected to control measures, investigation or surveillance, and is reclassified over time. The premises number is combined with the premises classification to produce a current status for each premises at any one time. For example, 32IP is the 32nd premises to be sequentially numbered and is currently an IP. As control measures are completed, it will be reclassified to 32RP, then 32ARP-AN and finally 32ARP.

Tracking of premises numbers, classification and reclassification is a function of the LCC. It is usually achieved using a computer software program to track the current status of the response, and generate surveillance and tracing tasks that need to be carried out. The program also gathers useful statistics about the response to inform routine situation reports and track the effectiveness of the response.

A number of different software programs are in use in different jurisdictions — for example, BioSIRT in Queensland and the Northern Territory, MAX in Victoria, and BioBIS in New South Wales. Jurisdictions have developed a variety of approaches and solutions for the numbering and classification of premises during an EAD response.

Appendix 1: Definition of premises classifications and qualifiers in an emergency animal disease response

Approved processing facility (APF): An abattoir, knackery, milk processing plant or other such facility that maintains increased biosecurity standards. Such a facility could have animals or animal products introduced from lower risk premises under a permit for processing to an approved standard.

At-risk premises (ARP): A premises in a restricted area that contains a live susceptible animal(s) but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, dangerous contact premises, dangerous contact processing facility, suspect premises or trace premises. See also *restricted area*.

Dangerous contact premises (DCP): A premises, apart from an abattoir, knackery or milk processing plant (or other such facility) that, after investigation and based on a risk assessment, is considered to contain a susceptible animal(s) not showing clinical signs, but considered highly likely to contain an infected animal(s) and/or contaminated animal products, wastes or things that present an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, and that therefore requires action to address the risk.

Dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF): An abattoir, knackery, milk processing plant or other such facility that, based on a risk assessment, appears highly likely to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires action to address the risk.

Infected premises (IP): A defined area (which may be all or part of a property) on which animals meeting the case definition are or were present, or the causative agent of the emergency animal disease is present, or there is a reasonable suspicion that either is present, and that the relevant chief veterinary officer or their delegate has declared to be an infected premises.

Premises of relevance (POR): A premises in a control area that contains a live susceptible animal(s) but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, suspect premises, trace premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facility.

Resolved premises (RP): An infected premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facility that has completed the required control measures and is subject to the procedures and restrictions appropriate to the area in which it is located.

Suspect premises (SP): Temporary classification of a premises that contains a susceptible animal(s) not known to have been exposed to the disease agent but

showing clinical signs similar to the case definition, and that therefore requires investigation(s).

Trace premises (TP): Temporary classification of a premises that contains susceptible animal(s) that tracing indicates may have been exposed to the disease agent, or contains contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires investigation(s).

Unknown status premises (UP): A premises within a declared area where the current presence of susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things is unknown.

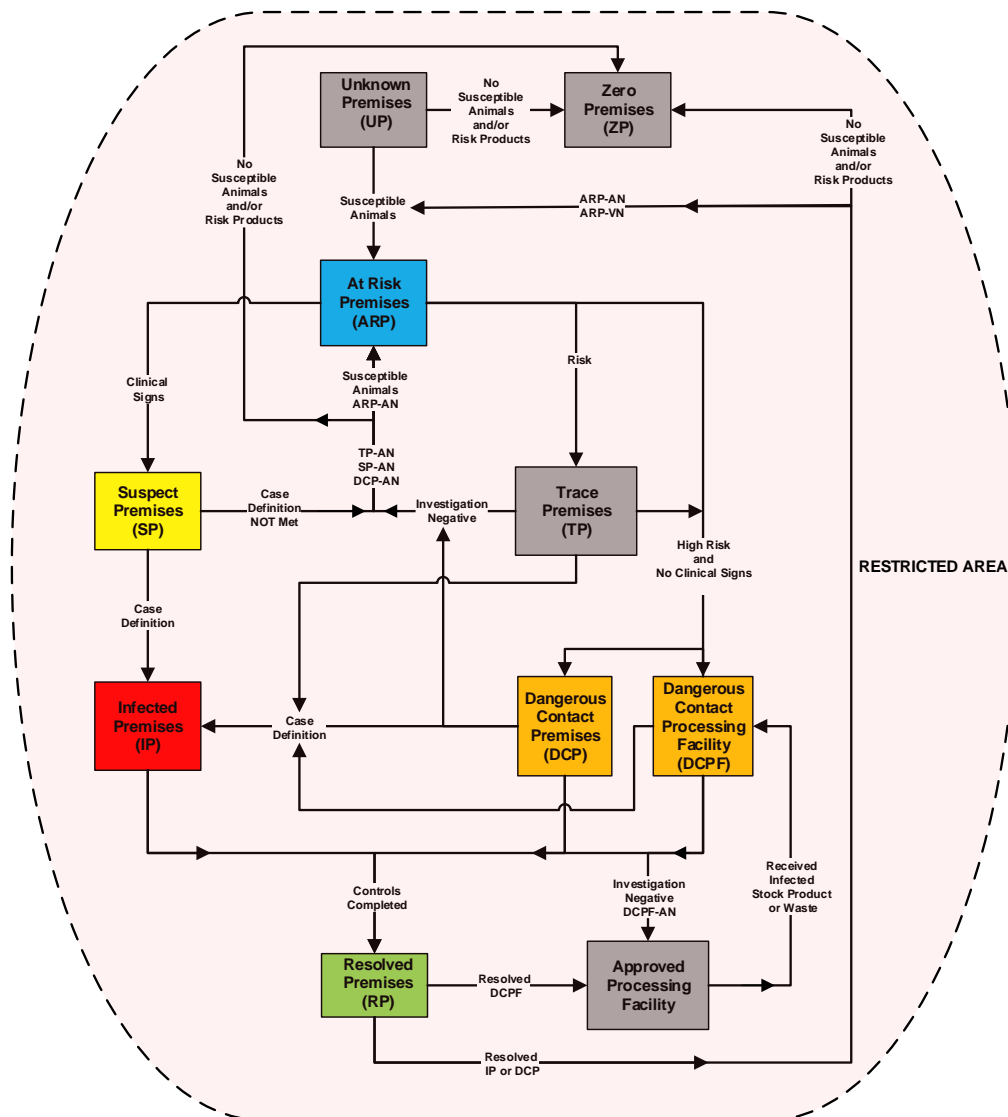
Zero susceptible species premises (ZP): A premises that does not contain any susceptible animals or risk products, wastes or things.

Qualifiers

Assessed negative (AN): A qualifier that may be applied to at-risk premises, premises of relevance and premises previously defined as suspect premises, trace premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facilities that have undergone an epidemiological and/or laboratory assessment and have been cleared of suspicion at the time of classification, and can progress to another status.

Vaccinated (VN): A qualifier that may be used to identify premises that contain susceptible animals that have been vaccinated against the emergency animal disease in question.

Appendix 2: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a restricted area²³



KEY

-AN = Assessed Negative
 -VN = Vaccinated

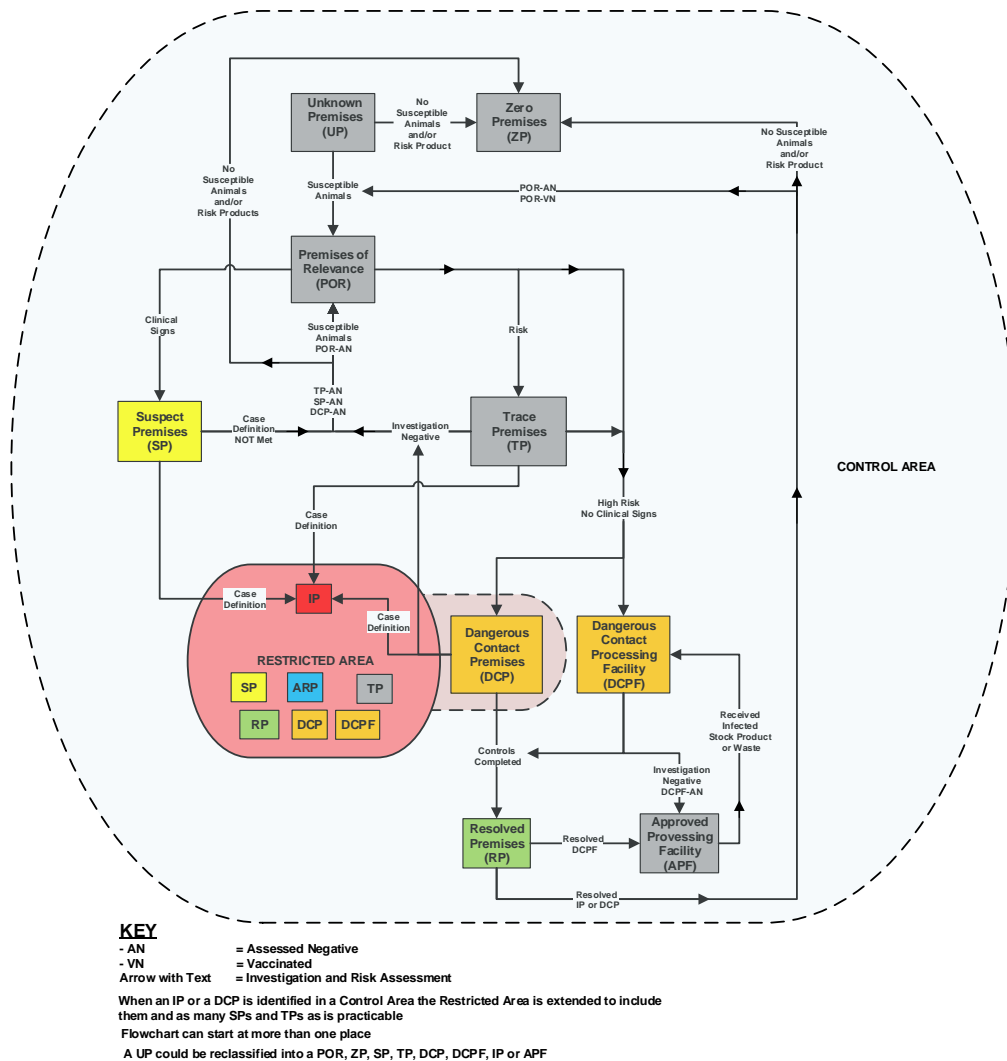
Arrow with Text = Investigation and Risk Assessment

Flowchart can start at more than one place

A UP could be reclassified into an ARP, ZP, SP, TP, DCP, DCPF, IP or APF

²³ This flowchart is focused on control measures required for highly contagious diseases (eg equine influenza and foot and mouth disease). For diseases that are not in this category (eg Hendra virus, anthrax and Australian bat lyssavirus), procedures for declared areas may not be used at all and/or procedures for premises classification may need to be modified.

Appendix 3: Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a control area²⁴



²⁴ This flowchart is focused on control measures required for highly contagious diseases (eg equine influenza and foot and mouth disease). For diseases that are not in this category (eg Hendra virus, anthrax and Australian bat lyssavirus), procedures for declared areas may not be used at all and/or procedures for premises classification may need to be modified.