

## **BIOSECURITY GUIDANCE FOR ZOO BIRD COLLECTIONS - APPROVAL UNDER EC DIRECTIVE 92/65 (BALAI)**

**1 Biosecurity Measures** – are the precautions taken to prevent movement of disease between the zoo collection animals and wild birds or domestic poultry (chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese etc) outside the zoo.

During inspections for Approval under the Balai Directive, inspectors are required to consider the balance between practical biosecurity measures and the requirements of birds held in zoological and laboratory collections.

Examples include:

- The size of the enclosure to allow adequate welfare;
- Possible contact between birds and members of the public for educational purposes;
- Deliveries of food and products from commercial poultry premises;
- Unique welfare and housing requirements.

### **Zoos and other sites should undertake the following processes:**

A biosecurity assessment and control plan for the whole site to prevent introduction and transmission of Annex A diseases. All zoos should have a contingency plan for additional biosecurity measures during outbreaks of notifiable disease in wild birds or domestic poultry.

#### *Site Biosecurity*

### **The following measures should be implemented on a site-wide basis.**

- All birds brought into a collection should be isolated for the required period as described in Annex 5 below. The details of this process should be included in your zoo health and surveillance programme.
- Staff who work with birds in a Balai approved premises should ideally not work with other birds outside the approved premises. If this situation cannot be avoided, they should change clothing on entering the zoo or site.
- Only essential vehicles should enter the bird enclosures. The vehicles should be free of obvious contamination and during periods of heightened risk should have their wheels and wheel arches disinfected with an approved product. Pest control programs should be in place.
- All crates used to transport birds, should be cleaned and disinfected after each use. Equipment should not be moved into different bird epidemiological units without cleaning and disinfecting it first.
- Buildings, feed stores and containers should be sealed to prevent animals and wild birds contaminating feed, nesting or roosting.

## Free-ranging Birds and Wildlife

The presence of free-ranging zoo birds **does not** exclude a collection gaining Balai Approval. The approval is granted on the basis of a high standard of health care, disease surveillance and preventative medicine across the premises. The following points should be noted:

If free-ranging birds are present they should be included in all surveillance programmes and an appropriate number should undergo full post-mortems.

- Where possible free-ranging zoo birds should be prevented from entering other animal enclosures particularly bird enclosures. Pest control programs should be in place. Minimise potential contact with wild birds. Netting enclosures also reduces exposure to wild birds in some circumstances. The size of netting used should be decided based on assessment of the practical aspects of erection and maintenance, and by the species of birds that you require to exclude. If your zoo has a particular problem with wild ducks, etc, then it is advantageous to target these species, whereas if the majority of birds potentially contaminating food and water are starlings and sparrows, smaller gauge would be more suitable. The choice of protective netting should be a practical balance between the size of the enclosure, cost, and the degree of protection from contact with wild birds. For example, very large enclosures covered with small size netting may actually encourage birds to rest on it therefore not using netting at all may be more appropriate.
- Open bird enclosures with no netting or roofing **does not** exclude approval under the Balai Directive providing that biosecurity measures have been considered and effort have been made by other means outlined in this document.
- Try to reduce faecal contamination of enclosures from wild birds – remove overhangs, perches, etc.
- Where water courses run through enclosures, measures should be taken to try to prevent animals contaminating the water upstream.
- In areas of high contact increased surveillance, in order to identify and implement control measures, should be undertaken.
- Care should be paid on the design and location of drinkers and feeders in order to prevent faecal contamination from wild birds

**BIOSECURITY GUIDANCE FOR ZOO MAMMAL COLLECTIONS - APPROVAL UNDER EC DIRECTIVE 92/65 (BALAI)**

1. **Biosecurity Measures** – are the precautions taken to prevent movement of disease between the zoo collection animals and wild animals or domestic livestock outside the zoo.

During inspections for Approval under the Balai Directive the inspectors are required to consider the balance between practical biosecurity measures and the requirements of animals held in zoological and laboratory collections.

Zoological collections are recognised to have specific considerations in relation to biosecurity.

Examples include:

- The size of the enclosure to allow adequate welfare;
- Enclosure design that could allow mixing with wild animals;
- Possible contact between animals and members of the public for educational purposes;
- Deliveries of food, forage and other products from commercial agricultural premises;
- The need to move animals to other premises for the purposes of breeding programmes; and
- Unique welfare and housing requirements.

2. **Zoos and other sites should undertake the following processes:**

- A biosecurity assessment and control plan for the whole site to prevent introduction and transmission of Annex A diseases. All zoos should have a contingency plan for additional biosecurity measures during outbreaks of notifiable disease in wild birds or domestic poultry.

***Site Biosecurity***

3. **The following measures should be implemented on a site-wide basis.**

- All animals brought into a collection should be isolated according to the requirements of Annex 5. The details of this process should be included in the zoo health and surveillance programme. (See Guidance)
- Staff should change clothing on entering the zoo or site. Minimise potential contact between zoo animals and animals outside the zoo by using enclosure barriers effectively. Consideration should be taken of aerosol transmission and therefore a minimum of 3m between enclosure fencing and perimeter fences which would allow aerosol spread should be

maintained. For example wire fencing separating zoo hoof stock and domestic cattle. .

- Vehicles entering the zoo enclosures should be free of obvious contamination and during periods of heightened risk should have their wheels and wheel arches disinfected with a Defra-approved product.
- All crates used to transport animals should be cleaned and disinfected after each use. Equipment should not be moved into different epidemiological units without cleaning and disinfecting it first. feed stores and containers should be managed to prevent pest animals from contaminating feed,
- Feed and water should be protected.
- Forage should be obtained from a clean source and stored in order to minimise contamination.
- Where water courses run through enclosures, measures should be taken to try to prevent animals contaminating the water upstream.

#### **4. Free-ranging animals and wildlife**

The presence of free-ranging zoo animals **does not** exclude a collection gaining Balai Approval. The approval is granted on the basis of a high standard of health care, disease surveillance and preventative medicine across the premises.

- If free-ranging mammals are present they should be included in all surveillance programmes and an appropriate number should undergo full post-mortems.
- Where possible free-ranging zoo mammals should be prevented from entering other animal enclosures particularly species of the same taxon.
- Pest control programs should be in place. Active monitoring and control of rodents and feral cats should be in place.
- Control of squirrels, foxes and other wildlife may be necessary if the veterinarian considers that they are contributing significantly to disease in the collection. Any actions must comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

#### **Additional Technical Notes: Free-Living Animals within approved premises**

##### **Primates**

i. It is a common practice for zoos to keep a colony of Marmosets or Tamarins (Callitrichid species) in a home shelter with open doors, from which they can roam freely into local trees. The home shelter is usually located in a large tree, and the monkeys spend much of their time in the upper parts of their home tree. From there it may be possible for them to spread into other trees and further afield, but experience shows that they rarely tend to stray further. These primate species are strongly attached to their home base, and as long as their food supply and their sense of security remain strong in their home base, they prefer to remain close to it.

ii. It is acceptable to approve a premises containing a number of enclosures with various non-human primates and/or other species, within which there may be one or two free living primate colonies, provided that the inspecting VO is satisfied that the conditions are likely to satisfy the free-living colony's requirement for food and security, such that they are not likely to stray from their home base. If in doubt the inspecting VO

should discuss the situation with the Veterinary Science Team and each case will be decided on its merits.

iii. It will not normally be acceptable in any circumstances for the free-living colony to be located close to the zoo perimeter fence.