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To whom it may concern

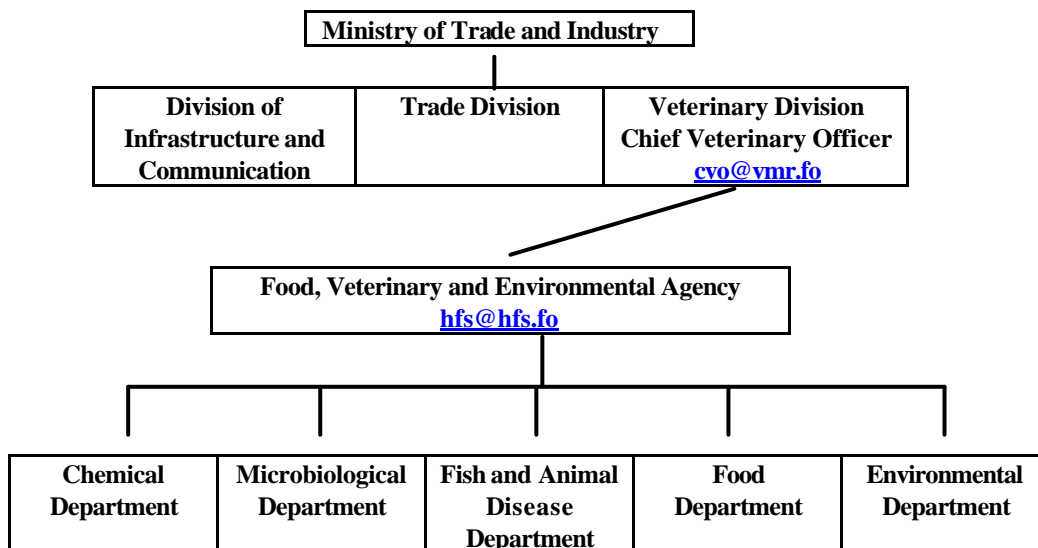
Concerning: Avian influenza

Legislation

Act of Parliament No 16 of 23 February 2001 on Diseases of Animals (on Prevention and Eradication of Diseases of Animals and on Border Control of Animals and Animal Products)¹ enable the Faroese Veterinary Authorities to employ the measures laid down in Directive 2005/94/EC² and the relevant Decisions in the control of avian influenza.

Organisation of the Faroese Veterinary Authorities

The Chief Veterinary Officer is head of the Veterinary Division in the Ministry of Trade and Industry responsible for development of the veterinary legislation, implementation of EU legislation and the control strategy for animal diseases and food hygiene.



The Fish and Animal Disease Department in the Food, Veterinary and Environmental Agency is responsible for the control and surveillance of fish and animal diseases. Samples of wild birds found dead or suspected of being infected by avian influenza virus are examined at the Danish Institute for Food and Veterinary Research in Århus. In a few weeks Fish and Animal Disease Department will be able to test for avian influenza virus by the RT-PCR technique.

¹ Lf. nr. 16 frá 23.02.2001 um djórasjúkur (um fyrirbygging og niðurberjing av sjúkum hjá djórum og um marknaeftirlit við djórum og djóraúrdráttum).

² COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2005/94/EC of 20 December 2005 on Community measures for the control of avian influenza and repealing Directive 92/40/EEC.

Contingency plan for avian influenza

In case of outbreak of avian influenza a crisis group consisting of the chief veterinary officer from the Veterinary Division of the Ministry, the managing director of the Food, Veterinary and Environmental Agency and the head of Fish and Animal Disease Department of the Agency will take the necessary actions for control of the outbreak according to Directive 2005/94/EC. If public health risk is involved the crisis group will be supplemented by representatives from the medical authorities.

The Fish and Animal Disease Department of the Agency has the necessary equipment for personal protection and collection of samples. Outbreak of avian influenza will be notified to the EU Commission and Member States according to the ADNS.

The avian influenza situation in the Faroe Islands

The Faroe Islands is part of the East Atlantic flyway where wild migrating birds are passing by from there wintering places in West Europe and Western Africa to there breeding places in East Greenland, Iceland, Northern Scandinavia and Northern Russia. Avian influenza virus may thus be introduced to Faroe Islands by migrating birds if the virus becomes widely established in migrating wild birds in West Europe.

In the period from 24 September 2005 to 7 April 2006 samples of 28 dead wild birds have been examined for avian influenza at the Danish Institute for Food and Veterinary Research in Århus with negative result. The species and numbers of wild birds examined include:

Species	Number
Whooping swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>)	4
Greylag (<i>Anser anser</i>)	1
Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>)	6
Tufted duck (<i>Aythya fuligula</i>)	1
Eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>)	2
Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)	1
Great blackback (<i>Larus marinus</i>)	1
Lesser blackback (<i>Larus fuscus</i>)	1
Guillemot (<i>Urea aalga</i>)	2
Rock dove (<i>Columba livia</i>)	2
Blackbird (<i>Turdus merula</i>)	1
Carrion crow (<i>Corvus corone</i>)	3
House sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	2
Domestic hen (<i>Gallus domesticus</i>)	1

The results of the examination of 6 wild birds found dead after 11 April are not available yet.

Bjørn Harlou
Chief Veterinary Officer