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It is approved,

President Secretary of State

Dr. Vladimir Alexandru MĂNĂSTIREANU

I propose for approval,

Vice-president Undersecretary of State

Dr. Laszlo Nagy CSUTAK

I propose for approval,

Director General

Dr. Cristian DUICU

**Rapport on the National Simulation Exercise for the Classical Swine Fever and African Swine Fever in Wildlife
County of Iași
17-18 September 2014**

On the 17-18 September 2014, took place, in Iași, county of Iași, the National Simulation Exercise for classical swine fever and African swine fever in wildlife, organised by the NSVFSA in collaboration with the CSVFSD Iași.

At this exercise, have participated representatives of the National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (NSVFSA), the Institute for Diagnosis and Animal Health (IDAH), the 42 Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Directorates (CSVFSD), the Ministry of National Defence, the Institution of the Prefect of Iași and the Local Centre for Disease Control (LDCC) Iași, the Romsilva și and of the Territorial Inspectorate for the Forestry Regime Suceava (ITRSV). Foreign observers from the Republic of Moldova also participated in the exercise.

Prior to the exercise, the participants have received the bibliography that they were supposed to consult in view of the participation in the exercise, and some key documents for all the steps of the exercise. The day of the exercise, an official file with the relevant documents was handed over to each participant.

The exercise was run for two days and had three sections, as follows:

- The exercise (*drill*) simulating the field intervention in case of a suspicion of Classical swine fever or African swine fever in a wild environment, where the actors were the CSVFSD participants and the representatives of the ITRSV Suceava and Romsilva. The exercise took place on the morning of the 17th of September 2014, lasted for two hours and was of a drill type. During the exercise, the participants, organised in two teams, have sampled, packed and labelled the samples necessary for the diagnosis, have performed the post mortem examination on the wild boar corpse on which the samples have been collected, have performed the disinfection procedures after all the activities and have made the epidemiological inquiry. The samples collected were sent to the laboratory for testing,
- The exercise in the working groups, on themes given by the organizer of the exercise, which had to be solved according to the national and European legislation in force. The time allocated was two hours, and also two hours was the time allocated for reporting the results. Two working groups were organised involving all the participants in the exercise. The results were reported in the presence of all the participants by a rapporteur designated by the working group.
- Following the supposed confirmation of the African swine fever, the decision making process was simulated at the level of Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) of the Iasi County. This activity took place on the morning of the 18th of September 2014, and in this part of the exercise took part all the LDCC full members from the county of Iași and, as observers, all the other participants in the exercise. Following this meeting, the measure plan for the intervention on African swine fever in the county of Iași was approved. The Iași LDCC acted promptly and efficiently, and had established the general framework for the next actions and regular meetings, or any time when it will be necessary.

The participants had the opportunity to give a final evaluation of the simulation exercise, using evaluation sheets handed to them. On a scale from 1 to 10, the participants answering the questionnaire appreciated with the final mark 9,79 the organization, the performance of each action and the quality of the exercise.

With respect to the suggestions made by the participants concerning the themes and the frequency of the future exercises, the following proposals have been retained:

- to organize simulation exercises also other major animal diseases, mainly for those where an operational manual is available;
- to organize a simulation exercise in unfavourable weather conditions (during the winter);
- to organize a simulation exercise with the participation, alongside the vets, of all hunting guards and rangers of the county (they took part in the present exercise, although not in large number);
- to make the theoretical exercise more complex and the working groups smaller in order to ensure the involvement of all participants;
- to organize at least one simulation exercise each year, running for at least three working days,

with an emphasis on the practicalities and field activities;

- to extent the scenario of the exercise to the suspicion of simultaneous occurrence of several major animal diseases, and to the suspicion of intentional contamination (bio/agro -terrorism activities);
- to organize exercises during the evolution of a major disease, in order to give the participants the opportunity to take part “live” in the application of the control measures adopted during the crisis (for instance, in the bluetongue outbreaks that are currently on the Romanian territory);
- to organize the future exercises in counties easier accessible for the participants from other counties, preferably closer to the heart of the country;
- more frequent theoretical trainings, with different epidemiological themes;
- to organize a simulation exercise with the lab specialists, working the samples in crisis conditions.

General conclusions at the end of this exercise

- a. We appreciate that the exercise met all the objectives established, i.e. to help the participants to attain a good level of knowledge on the intervention at the suspicion and confirmation of African swine fever and classical swine fever in the wild.
- b. By ensuring the participation of different representatives of decision making factors and operational actors, and by inviting foreign observers, Romania proved to be objective, transparent and compliant with the EU legislation on the control of the major animal diseases.
- c. The operational manual for the African swine fever and the classical swine fever, promoted in the autumn 2014, proved to be efficient in simulation conditions in the field. The intervention procedures and the forms provided were easy to apply or fill in. It is necessary, however, to amend the document accompanying the samples sent to the diagnostic laboratory; currently, this form has a new lay out.
- d. The supportive functions of the operational partners were properly assimilated. The LDCC proved to have the skills necessary to organize efficiently meetings for the adoption of decisions during the evolution of major animal diseases.
- e. Taking into consideration the special importance of the training the personnel for crisis situations generated by the confirmation of major animal diseases, the organization of national simulation exercises requires the allocation, for this purpose, of special funds from the annual budget of the NSVFSA. These funds have to be available in order to cover the accommodation of the participants, the forms, the conference rooms, the transport to the location of the exercise, the compensation of the animals killed for didactical purposes, etc. Otherwise, the financial pressure on the CSVFSD co-organizing the exercise is too burdensome, with possible consequences on the quality of the exercise.
- f. Although it is difficult to focus the attention of the authorities during the epidemiological peace time, the future approach of the animal disease control should be proactive. That is why the NSVFSA and its operational partners in the animal disease control have to anticipate the crisis and to properly prepare to meet the challenges. This means repeated trainings, coherent contingency plans and operational manuals, tested during different types of simulation

exercises (in real time, in the class room, trainings, testing only some of the operational procedures, etc), which should also aim to facilitate the exchanges among the participants. In this regard, at the level of the NSVFSA, it is more than necessary to set up a department dealing with these aspects. And this is also the view of the EU in its new Animal Health Law, where the major animal diseases are approached proactively, emphasising the importance of the prevention and of the rapid response to any suspicion of a disease.

The report of the exercise will be published on the NSVFSA web page, at the URL: <http://www.ansvsa.ro/?pag=861>. For information purposes, we propose the presentation of this simulation exercise report at a future meeting of the National Centre for Special Emergency Situations (NCSES).

Coordinator of the simulation exercise

Dr. Maria MIHĂIȚĂ

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