



ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

6th Meeting, 2004 (Session 2)

Wednesday 25 February 2004

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in Committee Room 1

1. **Item in private:** The Committee will consider whether to take item 4 in private.
2. **Irish Presidency of the European Union and the priorities of the Scottish Executive:** The Committee will take evidence on the priorities of the Scottish Executive as they relate to the Environment and Rural Development portfolio from—

Allan Wilson MSP, Acting Minister for Environment and Rural Development.

3. **Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill:** The Committee will consider the Bill at Stage 2 (Day 4).
4. **Inquiry into implementation of CAP reform:** The Committee will consider a draft remit and suggested programme of evidence in connection with this inquiry.

Tracey Hawe
Clerk to the Committee
Direct Tel: 0131-348-5221

The following papers are attached:

<p><u>Agenda Item 2</u></p> <p>An extract from a briefing paper from the Scottish Executive ('<i>Scottish Ministers' EU policy priorities for the Irish Presidency</i>') is attached</p> <p>Correspondence from the Deputy Minister for Environment and Rural Development on various EU issues is attached</p> <p>A paper from SPICe is attached (<i>for members only</i>)</p>	<p>ERD/S2/04/06/2a</p> <p>ERD/S2/04/06/2b</p> <p>ERD/S2/04/06/2c</p>
<p><u>Agenda Item 3</u></p> <p>Members are reminded to bring with them copies of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill.</p> <p>The Marshalled List of amendments will be published on Tuesday. The groupings will be available from document supply on Wednesday morning and will also be available at the meeting.</p>	
<p><u>Agenda Item 4</u></p> <p>A paper from the Convener is attached (<i>for members only</i>)</p>	<p>ERD/S2/04/06/4a</p>

PRIORITIES FOR THE IRISH PRESIDENCY

**SCOTTISH MINISTERS' EU POLICY PRIORITIES FOR THE IRISH PRESIDENCY
(JAN – JUNE 2004)**

INTRODUCTION BY THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

More than three-quarters of the work of the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Parliament is influenced by decisions taken in Brussels and Strasbourg. This means that it is crucial that we work hard to ensure that decisions made at the EU level reflect Scottish interests. The Executive is determined to play a positive role in influencing EU policy and to seize opportunities for Scotland that active engagement in the EU can bring, while continuing to protect Scottish interests.

The Executive's European Strategy sets out how we will focus our efforts on prioritising and engaging on the key issues likely to have a significant impact on people's lives in Scotland.

This paper outlines the key priorities for the next six months across Scottish Executive Departments. It brings together statements from my Cabinet colleagues of their EU policy priorities for the Irish Presidency and demonstrates that the Executive continues to be actively and dynamically engaged in the EU policy process.

I hope this paper proves helpful in assisting the European and External Relations Committee, and all Scottish Parliament Committees whose policy areas involve an EU dimension, to work with the Scottish Executive to make a positive contribution to Scotland's engagement in EU issues.

ANDY KERR

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

MINISTERIAL PRIORITIES FOR THE IRISH PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Prospects for External Relations

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

The Intergovernmental Conference: a Constitution for Europe

Following the failure of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) to conclude agreement on a Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe at the December 2003 European Council in Brussels, the European Council called on the incoming Irish Presidency to hold discussions with Member States and report to the Spring European Council on the scope for agreement. The Irish Presidency is expected to conclude its series of bilaterals around mid-February. A major issue still to be resolved is arrangements for qualified majority voting. Member States will wish to protect the progress they had made in discussions on the various points of concern to them, but no agreement can be deemed to have been reached on individual aspects of the draft Treaty until the IGC reaches final agreement on the whole package.

Enlargement

The Accession of 10 new Member States¹ will take place on 1 May. From this date, the new Member States will gain voting rights in the Council and ten new Commissioners from the new Member States will join the Commission. They will operate without portfolios until the new College of 25 Commissioners assumes office on 1 November. The Irish Presidency intends to take the necessary steps to integrate the new Member States as rapidly as possible into the Lisbon Strategy, Schengen Acquis and the economic policy co-ordination process.

Accession negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania will be taken forward under both the Irish and Dutch Presidencies, with a view to their joining the EU by the target date of 2007. A revised Accession Partnership with Turkey is intended to pave the way for a decision at the European Council in December 2004 to open negotiations with Turkey.

Beyond Enlargement: New Neighbours Initiative

Early in 2004 the Commission will present a detailed proposal for Action Plans with the Ukraine, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Israel. The Commission is expected to present its Communication on the New Neighbourhood Initiative to the Council and the European Parliament in May, with possible adoption of a Communication at the European Council meeting in June 2004.

¹ The Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Important issues for the Scottish Executive to be dealt with by the Presidency

Promoting Scotland in Europe

The Executive will step up its work to promote Scotland in EU countries. It will intensify its work with Scottish partners through the Scottish International Forum, and UK partners including the FCO, the Scotland Office and the British Council. The Executive and other public sector bodies are participating in Scottish-themed events in Scotland and France as part of the "Entente Cordiale" programme, and will also undertake events in the Netherlands. The Scottish Affairs Office in the British Embassy in Washington is leading the Executive's activity in the US to mark Tartan Day on 6 April. The Executive will also participate in the UK-wide public diplomacy campaign to mark EU enlargement, which will aim to foster links between young people in the UK and the Accession States. At the strategic level, the Executive will focus on promoting Scotland through the Fresh Talent initiative as a place in which to live, work and study, and on ensuring a coherent approach by the Scottish public sector to promoting accurate and up-to-date overseas perceptions of Scotland. The Executive will also participate in the European and External Relations Committee's Inquiry into the Promotion of Scotland Worldwide.

Intergovernmental Conference

The Executive will continue to work with the UK Government and with other EU regions with legislative powers to ensure that the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference respects Scottish policy interests. In particular, we will press for the proposals made by the Convention on the Future of Europe for enhancing the role of the regions in European decision-making to be incorporated in full in the Treaty to be agreed by the IGC.

Enlargement

The Executive remains strongly supportive of Enlargement. It is working with partners on a series of events to mark Enlargement and on fostering closer working relationships with the new Member States on an ongoing basis.

Prospects for Economy and Public Finance

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

Future Financial Perspectives

A Commission Communication on the future financing of the Union from 2007 onwards is expected early in 2004. Discussion of the Communication in the Council should inform the subsequent preparation by the Commission of a full package of financial and legislative proposals.

Important issues for the Scottish Executive to be dealt with by the Presidency

The Irish Presidency is urging a more concerted effort in the pursuit of the objectives set by the **Lisbon strategy**, which aims to make the European economy the most dynamic in the world by 2010. It intends to review and refocus the Lisbon process on improving competitiveness, boosting jobs and reaching sustainable economic development. **The cross-cutting nature of the Lisbon agenda means individual workstreams relate to a variety of Ministerial portfolios.** The Irish Presidency is looking to deliver concrete progress towards the Lisbon goals. This includes work on the following issues:

- Boosting investment in **research and development** and advancing the internal market (ELL portfolio);
- Supporting **infrastructure investment** by continuing to lever private sector and European Investment Bank backing for investment in transport, energy and IT networks (FPS, Transport and ELL portfolios);
- Enhancing **job creation** and promoting investment in training (ELL portfolio);
- Strengthening **social protection** and inclusion (Communities Portfolio);
- Furthering **sustainable development** – particularly through the promotion of innovation and investment in clean technologies (ELL and ERAD portfolios).

The Scottish Executive welcomes the continued commitment of successive Presidencies to the Lisbon strategy. The Lisbon strategy mirrors the Executive's goal of creating the conditions to maximise sustainable economic growth in Scotland. Our economic strategy aims at improving productivity, competitiveness and growth, while respecting the environment and strengthening the social fabric.

We especially welcome the Irish Presidency's goal to deliver tangible progress and prioritise EU action on the basis of the evidence laid out in the "Synthesis report" adopted on 21 January. We see evidence-based programmes and the setting of achievable targets at the heart of accountable policies that deliver concrete benefits.

ANDY KERR

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR ENTERPRISE AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Prospects for Energy Policy

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

The Irish Presidency will devote great attention to the recent package of Commission proposals on **Energy Infrastructure and Security of Supply**. The package contains proposals on gas cross-border regulation, modifications to the Trans-European Energy networks (TENs) guidelines, safeguarding security of electricity supply and infrastructure investment, and energy end-use efficiency and energy services. The Presidency is also committed to ensuring sustainable development of energy.

Important issues for the Scottish Executive to be dealt with by the Presidency

See top priorities above.

Implementation Issues

The Scottish Executive is committed to developing Scotland's renewable energy resource as this can provide environmental and economic benefits as well as promoting security of supply. We have set renewable electricity generation targets of 18% and 40% by 2010 and 2020 respectively and a funding mechanism for community and domestic scale renewable energy schemes has also been successfully introduced.

Our energy system is today facing a number of substantial challenges posed, in particular, by the threat of climate change, the implications of reduced UK oil, gas and coal production, and the need to update or replace much of the UK's energy infrastructure. The Scottish Executive is working closely with the UK Government to address these issues in order to maintain the secure and reliable energy system that is vital to our modern economy.

We are fully committed to the further development of the UK energy markets and we are working closely with the UK Government, Ofgem and the industry on the development of the British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements (BETTA). BETTA will create a unified wholesale electricity market across Great Britain, extending the benefits of increased competition to Scottish consumers and generators.

The Scottish Executive is committed to promoting the environmental and economic benefits of energy demand side management through its funding of the Energy Saving and Carbon Trusts in Scotland, and its support for local measures and initiatives through the Enterprise network. It fully supports policies that will help to improve the energy efficiency of enterprises and public sector organisations such as the **proposed Directive on End Use Efficiency and Energy Services**, although

such a directive would require close scrutiny in consultation with DEFRA and with industry stakeholders.

JIM WALLACE

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Prospects for Environment

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

The Presidency will focus on three main environmental themes:

- Environmental aspects of the Spring European Council;
- Development of a range of current environment proposals; and
- Increasing the visibility of the EU in an international context.

A number of dossiers relating to Waste, Climate Change and Air policy will be prioritised and progressed. In addition, a First Reading agreement on an extension to the LIFE funding programme on nature conservation and environmental protection projects in the EU and a Second Reading agreement on the proposed Directive on Volatile Organic Compounds in Paints may be reached. The conciliation process on the proposed Directive on Environmental Liability should also be concluded.

The Presidency will strive to make progress on the proposed Regulation on Chemicals (REACH) and the proposed Groundwater Daughter Directive. Following the deadlock at December Council, progress is unlikely to be made on the revision to the Bathing Waters Directive.

Important Environmental issues for the Scottish Executive during the Irish Presidency

The Executive has considerable interest in the Commission Communication "**Towards a Thematic Strategy on Prevention and Recycling of Waste**". The Communication addresses issues such as how to avoid generating waste, how to reduce the use of resources and which wastes to recycle. The Executive contributed to the UK response to the Commission consultation on the Communication (which concluded 31/11/03) and ensured that key stakeholders in Scotland were aware of the consultation being carried out. The Presidency will arrange for discussions on the Communication and adopt Council Conclusions in June. The full Thematic Strategy, setting out a proposed approach to encourage recycling and waste prevention, will be adopted by the Commission in September.

The European Parliament is due to deliver its First reading on the proposed **Groundwater Daughter Directive** at the 19-23 April plenary. The Daughter Directive should provide for measures in line with the Water Framework Directive's objectives for groundwater: to prevent or limit the input of pollutants; to prevent the deterioration of the status of groundwater bodies; and to reverse significant and

sustained upward pollution trends. Groundwater is used for drinking water relatively less in Scotland, compared to England and other European countries. We will accordingly look to ensure that protection should be risk-based and proportionate. Substantive progress is however unlikely to be made on the proposal during the Irish Presidency.

The Scottish Executive has an interest in the recently proposed Regulation to establish a system for the **Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)**. Negotiations are now underway in the ad-hoc group established under the Competitiveness Council; these are likely to take a considerable time and the Presidency is thus discussing handling of the dossier with future Presidencies. The Scottish Executive has three priorities regarding the REACH proposal:

- to develop a fast, efficient and workable process to test and screen chemicals and tackle those of most concern;
- to minimise animal testing; and
- to maintain the competitiveness of the chemicals industry and downstream users.

We have significant interest in the proposed Directive on **Environmental Liability**, which should go through the conciliation process under the Irish Presidency. The final text is likely to closely resemble the Council Common Position, which the Scottish Executive supports. The proposed Directive will provide for an EU liability regime dealing with damage to biodiversity, pollution of water and damage to land. We expect the Directive to come into effect in 2007-08, allowing for preparatory activity by public authority and business sectors affected.

The Executive supports the proposed Regulation to extend from 2004-2006 the period of the **LIFE** funding programme, supporting projects for nature conservation and environmental protection measures in Member States. The Irish Presidency is in discussions with the European Parliament about the dossier and hopes to be able to agree the dossier at First Reading. This proposal will allow, for example, major innovative environmental projects to continue to be funded while the EU plans arrangements for the period beyond 2006. One such project was approved last year in Scotland and two bids have been made for a start in 2004.

Finally, given the extent of Natura 2000 protected species and habitats in Scotland, we will have considerable interest in the imminent Commission Communication on **Financing Natura 2000**. This will consider how to ensure the future financing of the network, looking at the possibility of obtaining money from existing Community funds and from elsewhere. The Communication will build on the conclusions of the EU working group chaired by John Markland, Chairman of Scottish Natural Heritage.

Prospects for the Agriculture Policy

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

While the framework for CAP reform was agreed in June 2003, the Irish Presidency faces the challenge of concluding work on the detailed implementing rules. These

need to be in place quickly to allow Member States to develop the mechanisms necessary to introduce the much changed CAP package from 1 January 2005. In addition, the Presidency will hope to conclude arrangements for reform of the olive oil, hops, cotton and tobacco regimes.

Elsewhere, the emphasis is on a package of Veterinary and Food Safety matters the most pressing of which relate to welfare of animals in transit and tightening up of food and feed controls.

Important issues for the Scottish Executive to be dealt with by the Presidency

CAP Reform

Development of the **CAP Reform Implementing Regulations** is a key priority for the Presidency and of considerable importance to all Member States. It is important that these regulations are finalised as soon as possible to allow the Executive to take final detailed decisions on the shape of CAP reform in Scotland and to develop the systems required for implementation from 1 January 2005. As part of this process, we must participate fully in the development of the detailed implementing regulations to ensure that they will meet the needs of Scotland.

Welfare of animals during transport

Under the Italian Presidency the Commission proposed a package of measures designed to improve the welfare of animals during transport. The Irish Presidency considers this issue to be a high priority and is aiming to have new measures agreed at the April Council. These proposals have been discussed at Council Working Groups and two CVO meetings so that much of the detail has already been considered and general agreement reached. The two outstanding issues of importance to livestock farmers in the remote parts of Scotland relate to travel times and rest periods. The original Commission proposals for a 12 hour rest period, on board the vehicle after every travel period of 9 hours has received very little support from Member States. The general preference is to reduce considerably the first rest period and to allow the second travel period to be increased to 12 hours to reach the destination. The Scottish Executive will, within the Council Working Group, continue to argue the case for such a change but if unsuccessful will seek to secure a derogation for geographically remote areas.

Implementation issues

A very considerable amount of work will be required in preparation for the implementation of the CAP Reform agreement in January 2005. That apart, there are no major implementation issues to be addressed.

Prospects for Fisheries Policy

The top priorities as stated by the Presidency

The Irish Presidency will focus on maximising sustainable fishing opportunities for the European Union's fishing industry. This will be achieved by the implementation,

in consultation with stakeholders, of development, conservation and control measures which take full account of regional socio-economic and environmental policy.

On external policy, the Presidency will seek to conclude new fisheries agreements with a number of third countries. Advancing the interest of the Community in Regional Fisheries Organisations with a view to enhancing the role such organisations play in the sustainable management of international fisheries will also be a key area for the Irish Presidency.

Particular aims of the Presidency include the following:

- To establish **Regional Advisory Councils** under the Common Fisheries Policy
- To establish measures for **the recovery of cod stocks**
- To establish an **observer scheme for NAFO** (the Northwest Atlantic)
- To establish measures for **the recovery of the Northern hake stock**
- To regulate the management of fisheries in **the Mediterranean Sea**
- To modify **the Fourth Protocol with Greenland**
- To decide Community **financial contribution to fisheries control programmes**
- To fix the fishing effort in **Western Waters**
- To protect the **Darwin Mounds**
- To lay down measures concerning **incidental catches of cetaceans**
- To lay down detailed rules for **structural assistance in fisheries ("FIG")**
- To debate technical measures for **environmentally friendly fishing**
- To debate **the recovery of sole** stocks
- To debate **the recovery of Southern hake** stocks
- To debate **the recovery of Norway lobster**
- To debate **the recovery of stocks in the Cantabrian Sea**
- To debate **eco-labelling** of fishery products
- To debate report on access restrictions (**Shetland Box**)
- To debate fishery **resources in third country waters**
- To debate technical measures in **the Baltic Sea, the Belts and the Sound**

Important issues for the Scottish Executive to be dealt with by the Presidency

The development of **Regional Advisory Councils**, which are designed to give stakeholders a proactive role in fisheries management, is of prime importance in achieving the continuing reform of a Common Fisheries Policy. The Scottish Executive actively promoted the development of such Advisory Councils in preceding Presidencies, and expects the regulation to be adopted during the Irish Presidency – with the establishment of an Advisory Council for the North Sea soon thereafter.

We will also contribute to deliberations on the planned establishment of an **EU Fisheries Control Agency**, where it appears a decision in principle has been taken (including to site the Agency in Spain), but decisions about its scale and remit remain

to be taken following detailed examination and discussion.

The establishment of additional measures for **the recovery of cod stocks** should include resolution of some issues flowing from decisions taken at the December 2003 Council on days at sea (effort control) measures; agreement on haddock management measures (“spatial management”, to allow prosecution of increased haddock fishing opportunities); and the development and adoption of a more flexible system of fishing effort, based on kilowatt days rather than simple (average) days at sea. This change of approach would permit account to be taken of differing vessel circumstances and be of benefit to the Scottish whitefish fleet. There will also be detailed discussions on arrangements (including benchmarks) for monitoring cod recovery measures, with implications for enforcement practices and resources.

Scottish Executive will maintain an active interest in the ongoing review of the **FIFG** (Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance) Regulation. This will include ensuring that the laying down of additional, detailed rules for structural assistance to aquaculture will continue to allow necessary measures in support of the Scottish salmon-farming industry in line with the Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture.

Measures to protect the **Darwin Mounds** from damaging trawling activity have been actively promoted by the Scottish Executive. Long term protective measures are required to replace the emergency measures that were successfully introduced under the preceding Italian Presidency; the Scottish Executive’s promotion of this issue reflects a policy commitment to sustainability through the adoption of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

Environmental policy underpins the Scottish Executive’s active support for measures concerning **incidental catches of cetaceans** (including dolphins and porpoises) in fisheries. Fisheries Research Services, with the active co-operation of the Scottish fishing industry, observes the relevant Scottish fisheries. Consultation on a strategy for reducing incidental catches of cetaceans has issued, pre-empting Community measures.

Scottish Executive maintains an interest in the forthcoming report on conservation value of the access restrictions allowed under the Common Fisheries Policy, including the **Shetland Box**. Although adjustments to the rules governing access restrictions will not be made under the Irish Presidency, the Shetland Box is an area of ecological importance and local economic significance; it is essential to ensure that fishing effort in the area is not increased in the future.

Implementation issues

The priority for the Irish Presidency with a significant impact on delivery plans is that for **Regional Advisory Councils**: an operational Advisory Council for the North Sea is expected to come into being soon; it will require both technical and financial support. Full representation of the Scottish fishing industry can only be assured if such support is forthcoming from the Scottish Executive. The development of Regional Advisory Councils offers an opportunity to promote any appropriate recommendations for the regional management of the fisheries, as are expected to

be made by the Cabinet Office's forthcoming study of the fishing industry.

The Scottish Executive will maintain a strong interest in the sustainable development of aquaculture as we implement the strategic framework. We have submitted a safeguards application in co-operation with Ireland. This application is designed to provide short term stability in the European salmon market, as we seek to provide a breathing space to allow the Scottish industry to develop and diversify into areas such as new species.

ALLAN WILSON

Agenda Item 2
**Environment and Rural
Development Committee**
25 February 2004
ERD/S2/04/06/2B

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18 February 2004

You wrote to me on 29 January about a number of EU issues which were not reached at the meeting on 14 January: the draft Batteries Directive, the recently-agreed measures on the identification of sheep and goats, and the proposed regulation on the transport of live animals.

As regards the draft Batteries Directive, the Executive is in contact with the development of these proposals through ongoing liaison between Executive officials and UK Government officials, and through our intelligence gathering activities in Brussels. So far, there has been nothing to suggest that the draft Directive will impact any differently in Scotland than elsewhere in the UK. Were that to be so, we would of course input directly into UK Government thinking as well as working with them to influence the debate in Brussels.

The Committee will be aware of the proposed development of a lithium-ion battery recycling plant in Golspie, Sutherland. Supported by the Scottish Executive and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the plant will be the only one of its kind in Europe and will place Scotland at the forefront of battery recycling. SEPA is also examining batteries as part of their Priority Waste Stream Projects. A data report is expected by 30 June 2004 and this will provide reliable information on which future decisions on battery recycling can be based.

The Committee also asked how implementation of the proposed Batteries Directive would be integrated with other legislation. As you will appreciate, the requirements of the draft Directive are likely to be the subject of extensive negotiation and revision before being finally adopted and that is

not a question I can therefore answer with any precision at present. In a wider context, however, we are conscious that the collection infrastructure being developed for the WEEE Directive may lend itself to adoption for the Batteries Directive. More to the point, potentially meaningful amounts of consumer batteries are likely to be collected by default under WEEE collection systems and there will need to be a mechanism for separating batteries from genuine WEEE or otherwise apportioning responsibility for treatment to batteries producers.

You asked for further detail about the recently-agreed measures on identification of sheep and goats. Electronic identification was originally proposed for 2006 but we were successful in getting this delayed until 2008 and the Commission to agree to put an implementing proposal through Council prior to 2008. This will give us the opportunity to negotiate further on the detail of the proposal and highlight again our concerns about costs. Meantime, we will be putting our concerns to the Commission's Experts Group currently looking at EU implementation of Electronic Identification (EID), in particular the need to have proven technology which is affordable and readily available before implementation. Given that the technology has not yet been developed, reliable cost estimates are not available. Ultimately, it will be for individual sheep keepers and the wider industry to bear the costs to them of meeting the final EID requirements.

As you may recall from previous correspondence, our hard fought concessions on double tagging etc are dependent on the Commission approving our existing system. We understand the audit is likely to take place late spring. We are continuing to work closely with key industry stakeholders to ensure sheep and goat keepers understand the importance of complying with the current rules.

You also raised a number of questions on the proposed Regulation on the transport of live animals.

The Commission proposal on journey times for livestock is for a 12-hour rest period on board the vehicle to follow each travel period of 9 hours, and this sequence could be repeated indefinitely. Whilst most livestock journeys are less than 9 hours there are a considerable number of journeys starting in Scotland longer than 9 hours which would thus trigger the 12 hours rest period. The Executive do not support this proposal both on animal welfare grounds and because it would place a severe economic burden on Scottish livestock farmers particularly those in remote areas.

The Executive and Defra, in common with other Member States, are pressing for a much shorter rest period on board the vehicle, perhaps as short as one hour and for an extension of the second travel period from 9 to 12 hours. If successful this would allow animals journeys of 22 hours with a one hour rest on the vehicle. This would be more than sufficient for animals from even the remote Scottish farms to reach their destinations given that time spent on livestock vessels or on ferries does not count as travel time.

The technical discussions on the proposals for the requirements for vehicles and vessels are still on-going and, in particular, the need for forced ventilation in vehicles used for long distance journeys. We are well aware of the difficulties and additional costs this would have on transporters. We hope that if successful in securing a reduction in the on vehicle rest period from 12 to one hour then the requirement for mechanical ventilation will no longer be needed. We are not aware of any significant cost implications or difficulties for livestock vessels or ferries transporting animals in containers or vehicles, even though livestock vessels will be required to be inspected and approved by Member States.

At present journey logs are only required for journeys between Member States. The Commission proposals would require a journey log to be submitted for all long journeys (journeys of over

9 hours). We doubt this extension is necessary but this proposal has the backing of most Member States. If adopted there would be a requirement for the “exporting” farmer or transporter to prepare a journey log, submit that log to the local animal health office and to have the animals inspected by a vet before the journey starts. There should be little difficulty in completing the journey log but this will mean additional logs for checking in animal health offices and the farmer will have to arrange and pay for the veterinary inspection.

All transporters will require to be approved by Member States. At present specific approval is required only for long distance journeys and all other transporters are covered by a general authorisation. This will involve an increase in administration but should not prove to be a particularly difficult burden or involve significant additional costs on transporters. A further requirement in the Commission proposals is for all people transporting animals over 50 kms to be trained and competent. This would require the Member State to arrange for suitable courses and the issue of certificates of competence.

I trust this information will be helpful.

ALLAN WILSON