

Case No: 83239
Document No: 1098289

Final report

EFTA Surveillance Authority's mission to

Norway from 16 to 25 September 2019

on African swine fever

In response to information provided by Norway, any factual error noted in the draft report has been corrected; any clarification appears in the form of a footnote. Comments from Norway to the draft report are included in Annex 3 and information on the corrective actions already taken and planned are included in Annex 4 to the report.

Executive Summary

This report describes the outcome of a mission carried out by the EFTA Surveillance Authority in Norway from 16 September to 25 September 2019.

The objectives of the mission were to evaluate the official control systems in place to ensure that:

- emergency preparedness for an outbreak of African swine fever ('ASF') in domestic pigs and for cases in wild boar is effective;*
- surveillance for ASF for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in domestic pigs and wild boar in Norway has been implemented effectively to achieve the objective of early detection of ASF; and*
- the measures in place to prevent the disease from spreading from wild boars into the domestic pig population and between pig holdings are effective, should the disease occur.*

Overall, the report concludes that if there is a suspicion of ASF, the emergency preparedness arrangements are likely to be effective for domestic pigs but the preparation for an outbreak in wild boar is weaker. The contingency plan for domestic pigs is robust, staff are trained and could effectively manage an outbreak of ASF in domestic pigs. However, for wild boar, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority ('NFSA'), as the competent authority ('CA'), has no strategy for population management of wild boar or for the gradual stepping up of biosecurity in hunting grounds when no infection is present.

Passive surveillance provides the most effective means for detection of ASF in wild boar and domestic pigs in non-affected countries. In slaughterhouses, the system appears effective with the correct procedures being followed when suspicions of ASF in domestic pigs are notified. In contrast, there has been no passive surveillance sampling carried out in wild boar in Norway and no clinical suspicions notified during the previous 3 years, or possibly longer, on domestic pig farms. This does not provide confidence that ASF would be detected at an early stage following an outbreak in hunting grounds or on farms. This would delay the introduction of control measures, increasing the likelihood of a more extensive spread of the disease.

The written agreement between the NFSA and customs, provision of training by NFSA and regular contact between operational staff should ensure that official control measures in place for personal imports of products of animal origin reduce the risk of introduction of animal health diseases, including ASF, to Norway.

The animal traceability system in place should, in principle, allow for the forward and backward tracing of pigs. However, severe deficiencies in registration of movement of live pigs which have been known for many years have not been addressed by the NFSA.

*There are regular visits of official staff to commercial pig holdings to perform surveillance for methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* ('MRSA'). This focus on MRSA means that farms with a higher risk of introduction of disease, for example, outdoor farms and smaller farms, may not be targeted for inspections. During visits to commercial pig holdings checks covering traceability and mortality, which would be relevant for ASF, are not currently, included.*

The absence of any biosecurity requirements in hunting grounds increases the risk of the virus spreading should ASF occur in wild boar. There has been good use of expert groups to provide advice to the CA in relation to, for example, consequences of an increasing wild boar population in Norway and a risk assessment of the introduction of ASF to Norway. However, the suggested measures have not yet been implemented.

The report includes a number of recommendations addressed to the NFSA aimed at rectifying the identified shortcomings and enhancing the control systems in place.

Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE MISSION.....	4
3	LEGAL BASIS FOR THE MISSION	5
4	BACKGROUND - PREVIOUS MISSIONS	5
4.1	BACKGROUND INFORMATION.....	5
5	FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	6
5.1	LEGISLATIVE AND IMPLEMENTING MEASURES.....	6
5.2	COMPETENT AUTHORITIES	6
5.2.1	Designation of competent authorities and organisation of official controls.....	7
5.3	PREVENTIVE MEASURES	7
5.3.1	Wild boar management and biosecurity	7
5.3.2	Biosecurity measures applied on pig holdings	9
5.3.3	Traceability of pigs.....	9
5.3.4	Personal luggage controls.....	11
5.3.5	Communication and involvement of relevant stakeholders	12
5.4	EARLY DETECTION	12
5.4.1	Training and awareness programmes	12
5.4.2	Surveillance in wild boar.....	13
5.4.3	Surveillance in domestic pigs.....	14
5.4.4	Laboratory testing	14
5.5	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR ASF	15
5.5.1	National plan and operations manual	15
5.5.2	Simulation exercises.....	16
5.6	VERIFICATION, SUPERVISION AND EXPERT GROUP	16
6	CLOSING MEETING	17
7	RECOMMENDATIONS	17
	ANNEX 1 - LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS USED IN THE REPORT	19
	ANNEX 2 - RELEVANT LEGISLATION	20
	ANNEX 3 - COMMENTS FROM NORWAY TO THE DRAFT REPORT	21
	ANNEX 4 - PLAN FOR CORRECTIVE MEASURES PROVIDED BY NORWAY	23

1 Introduction

The mission took place in Norway from 16 September to 25 September 2019. The mission team comprised two auditors from the EFTA Surveillance Authority ('the Authority') and an observer from the Health and Food Audits and Analysis Directorate ('Directorate F') of DG Health and Food Safety ('DG SANTE') of the European Commission.

A pre-mission questionnaire was sent by the Authority to the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food on 7 May 2019. A reply ('the pre-mission document') was provided on 20 August 2019.

The opening meeting was held with representatives of the NFSA and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on 16 September 2019 in Oslo. At the meeting, the mission team confirmed the objectives and the itinerary of the mission and the Norwegian representatives provided additional information to that set out in the pre-mission document.

Throughout the mission, representatives of the NFSA accompanied the mission team.

A final meeting was held at the NFSA's offices in Oslo on 25 September 2019 when the mission team presented its main findings and preliminary conclusions from the mission.

The abbreviations used in the report are listed in Annex 1.

2 Objectives and scope of the mission

The objectives of the mission were to evaluate the official control systems in place to ensure that:

- emergency preparedness for an outbreak of ASF in domestic pigs and for cases in wild boar is effective;
- surveillance for ASF for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in domestic pigs and wild boar in Norway has been implemented effectively to achieve the objective of early detection of ASF; and
- the measures in place to prevent the disease from spreading from wild boars into the domestic pig population and between pig holdings are effective.

The scope of the mission related to:

- preventive measures and contingency planning (wild boar population management, biosecurity measures in hunting grounds, biosecurity measures on pig holdings, active and passive surveillance for ASF in domestic pigs and wild boars, an ASF contingency plan and an ASF operational manual);
- competent authority processes (controls, supervision, verification and analyses of results, audits, use of expert groups, cooperation between CAs involved, coordination between Norway and neighbouring EU and non-EU countries); and
- infrastructure (ASF laboratories, information technology systems for animal health management and pig traceability).

The assessment was carried out based on, and related to, the EEA legislation referred to in Annex 2 to this report. The assessment was further based on the pre-mission document.

The evaluation included the gathering of relevant information and appropriate verifications, by means of interviews/discussions, review of documents and records and on-the-spot visits, in order to ascertain both the normal control procedures adopted and the measures in place to ensure that necessary corrective actions are taken when necessary.

The meetings with the competent authorities and the visits carried out during the mission are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Meetings with competent authorities and visits to establishments/sites during the mission

	Number	Comments
Competent authorities	2	An opening meeting and a final meeting between the mission team and the Norwegian competent authorities in Oslo.
Pig holdings	6	4 commercial and 2 non-commercial.
Pig slaughterhouses	1	
Regional / Local NFSA offices	3	1 Regional and 2 Local offices.
Border inspection posts	1	
Laboratory	1	Norwegian Veterinary Institute.
Hunting grounds	2	Meeting with local and national representatives of hunting associations.

3 Legal basis for the mission

The legal basis for the mission is:

- a) Point 4 of the Introductory Part of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement;
- b) Article 1(e) of Protocol 1 to the Agreement between the EFTA States on the Establishment of a Surveillance Authority and a Court of Justice;
- c) Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in the Member States;
- d) Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules; and
- e) Article 20 of Council Directive 2002/60/EC of 27 June 2002 laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever.

4 Background - Previous missions

4.1 Background information

Since January 2014, ASF has spread in Europe and currently affects ten Member States. This has led to the European Commission applying specific regionalisation measures in these countries as the ASF situation has evolved. The Commission has carried out audits in both affected and non-affected countries. In the non-affected Member States, the audits focussed on the evaluation of preventive measures, the implementation of surveillance for early detection of ASF and emergency preparedness arrangements for dealing with

cases/outbreaks of the disease. This was the first ASF audit carried out in Norway to evaluate emergency preparedness and early detection for ASF.

5 Findings and conclusions

5.1 Legislative and implementing measures

Legal Requirements

Article 7 of the EEA Agreement requires acts referred to or contained in the Annexes to the Agreement to be made part of the Norwegian internal legal order.

Findings

1. The legal basis for legislation related to animal health is the Food Act of 19 December 2003 No 124 (LOV-2003-12-19-124) as amended. Any changes to the Food Act must be adopted by the Norwegian parliament. Power to issue implementing regulations under the Food Act is delegated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Health and Care Services and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries through the delegation of 19 December 2003 No 1790. That authority is further delegated to the NFSA in the delegation of 5 May 2004 No 884. In addition, the NFSA also has delegated authority to adopt regulations implementing *acquis* covered by the simplified procedures in the EEA Agreement.
2. The Animal Health Regulations (FOR-2002-06-27-732) provide the legal basis for, *inter alia*, general disease prevention, biosecurity, movement restrictions and measures in the event of suspicion or confirmation of a notifiable disease. The Animal Health Regulation was last amended by the Regulation of 26 April 2018 No 752 (FOR-2018-04-26-752) which introduced, *inter alia*, the requirement for biosecurity plans on commercial pig holdings.
3. The Animal Disease Regulation of 19 December 2014 No 1841 requires the NFSA to be notified immediately if veterinarians or laboratories have suspicion, or confirm an outbreak, of certain animal diseases. The list of diseases requiring immediate notification includes ASF. The Act on Food Production and Food safety, Section 6, requires any person who suspects the presence of a serious animal health disease to notify the NFSA.
4. The Regulation on traceability of pigs (FOR-2011-05-10-482) provides the legal basis for, *inter alia*, registration of holdings, pig identification, notification of movements and holding registers.

Conclusion on legislative and implementing measures

5. The relevant EEA requirements in the field of animal health related to ASF contingency planning and emergency preparedness have been included in the Norwegian internal legal order. This provides the competent authority with the powers to fully implement disease control measures related to ASF.

5.2 Competent authorities

Legal Requirements

Article 4(1) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004

Findings

5.2.1 Designation of competent authorities and organisation of official controls

6. The NFSA is the designated competent authority for food and feed safety, animal health and animal welfare. According to the pre-mission document, NFSA has responsibility for animal health control and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of animal health of wildlife populations, including in relation to ASF. A detailed description of the control system for animal health is provided in chapter 2.1 of the Country Profile for Norway, part 1¹
7. The Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA) is an Agency under the Ministry of Climate and Environment and was established in 2013. The NEA exercises regulatory authority over, provides guidance to, and supervises, regional and local government in all areas related to wildlife in general.

Conclusion on competent authorities

8. The competent authorities in charge of official controls in terrestrial animal health are clearly defined.

5.3 PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Legal Requirements

Articles 4, 14, 15 and 18 of Directive 2002/60/EC

Commission Decision 2003/422/EC

Articles 4 to 10 and 12 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004

Article 14(3)(C)(3) of Directive 64/432/EEC

Articles 3(1)(a) and 5(2) Directive of 2008/71/EC

Article 1(1) of Decision 2000/678/EC

Findings

5.3.1 Wild boar management and biosecurity

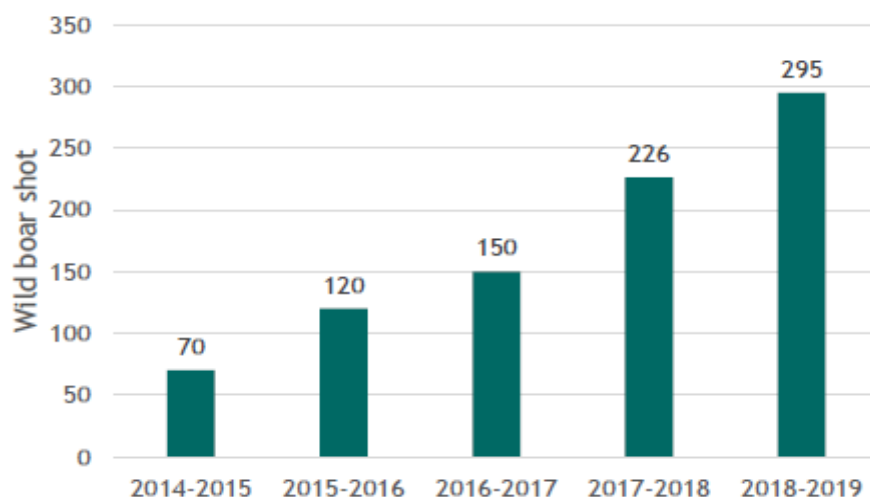
9. The NEA and the NFSA requested a scientific assessment of the potential for further spread of wild boar in Norway and the environmental and health risks associated with them. This report was published by the Norwegian Scientific Committee for Food and Environment in June 2018. The report concludes, *inter alia*, that a relevant measure to reduce the risk of introduction of ASF would be to keep the wild boar population as low as possible and that biosecurity measures remain one of the best available measures to avoid/reduce the spread of ASF from wild boar to domestic pigs.
10. In December 2018, the NFSA requested a general risk assessment from the Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI) regarding the risk of ASF entering Norway. The request included, *inter alia*, specific questions related to routes of potential ASF infection of domestic pigs, the efficacy of biosecurity barriers and, for wild

¹ <http://www.eftasurv.int/da/DocumentDirectAction/outputDocument?docId=4938>

boar, available risk mitigation measures. The NVI provided their response in February 2019.

11. One county, with a known wild boar population, adopted a management plan for wild boar in April 2016. The purpose of the plan was to provide guidance for wild boar management to the authorities, landowners and the general public.
12. The NFSA confirmed that the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have ordered the NFSA and the NEA to jointly prepare a management plan for ASF in wild boar by 1 November 2019.
13. The NEA confirmed that there were between 400 – 1200 wild boar in Norway (2018). This estimate is based on the hunting bag and “random” observations since there is currently no requirement for an official census.
14. Feeding of wild boar is permitted in Norway. NEA are currently consulting on a Regulation to prohibit feeding wild boar and only permit baiting (the provision of limited food for attracting wild boar for hunting).
15. NEA confirmed that there is no closed period for hunting wild boar and that they can be hunted throughout the year. The hunting season runs from 1 April to 31 March the following year. There is no limit on the hunting bag (number of wild boar actually shot) and the only restriction is that a female wild boar with a piglet under six months old cannot be hunted, although the piglet itself can be hunted.
16. Neither of the hunting grounds visited by the audit team kept any records of wild boar which had been shot. The NEA confirmed that it is the responsibility of individual hunters to report hunting bags to Statistics Norway (www.SSB.no) once per annum. One hunting group representative met by the audit team considered that not all shot wild boar were reported to Statistics Norway. He considered that as many as one third of shot wild boar are not reported.
17. The NEA provided the number of hunted wild boar in the previous five hunting seasons (Figure 1 below) and confirmed the wild boar population is concentrated in the south-east of Norway (Ostfold, Akershus and Hedmark counties).

Figure 1.



18. According to the pre-mission document, there are no national requirements for minimum standards of biosecurity in hunting grounds and, consequently, no official controls are carried out in hunting grounds.
19. The hunter representatives from each of the two different regions visited by the audit team confirmed that they had not received any official advice related to hunting ground biosecurity and considered that hunters had a limited knowledge of biosecurity.

5.3.2 *Biosecurity measures applied on pig holdings*

20. There is a legislative requirement for biosecurity measures on Norwegian pig holdings. The Norwegian Regulation of 18 February 2003 No 175 on keeping of pigs (FOR-2003-02-18-175) requires, *inter alia*, that all pig holdings have facilities for cleaning and disinfection of personnel and equipment and an infrastructure which can be cleaned and disinfected. The Norwegian Regulation of 27 June 2002 No. 732 on measures against diseases and zoonotic agents in animals (Animal Health Regulations) was last amended by FOR-2018-04-26-752, which introduced additional biosecurity requirements. These include, *inter alia*, a requirement that all commercial holdings have a biosecurity plan, a residency period of 30 days for pigs moving off a holding and a standstill period of 14 days prior to such a movement.
21. There are regular official control visits to pig holdings to perform surveillance for methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). These visits are mainly targeted at commercial breeding holdings and breeding holdings that rear all pigs born through to slaughter. Data provided in the pre-mission questionnaire confirmed that the NFSA carried out official controls on approximately 800 pig holdings between 2017 and 2019. These official control visits included an evaluation of biosecurity, for example, the presence of biosecurity barriers. During these official controls, more than eight percent of biosecurity barriers and more than fifteen percent of biosecurity plans inspected were non-compliant. Non-compliance was generally followed up by enforcement.
22. An amendment to the Animal Health Regulations (FOR-2002-06-27-732) introduced a mandatory requirement for biosecurity plans on commercial holdings. Advice on biosecurity plans is provided on the NFSA website. In one region visited, officials provided a biosecurity leaflet when they visited pig holdings to increase awareness. In addition, non-governmental organisations ('NGOs') were seen by the audit team to provide advice and templates for biosecurity plans.
23. In one region visited, Departmental staff confirmed that they had never seen a biosecurity plan and, in another region, the official only checked for the presence of a plan, rather than its content, when performing on farm controls. In one holding visited by the audit team, a biosecurity plan had only been drafted the previous week.
24. On all outdoor pig farms visited, the audit team considered the fencing in place was ineffective to prevent contact between pigs and wild boar.

5.3.3 *Traceability of pigs*

25. The NFSA case handling system ('MATS') includes the domestic animal database for pigs. The audit team confirmed that MATS contained, *inter alia*, the following

information concerning each pig holding: holding identification number (producer number), the address of the holding, the name and address of the person responsible for the animals and the geographic co-ordinates of the holding, as required by Article (1)(1) of Decision 2000/678/EC.

26. The NFSA confirmed that the holding identification number takes the format ww / xx / yyyy / zz which indicates respectively, county number, municipality number, farm number and person responsible for the animals.
27. The Regulation on traceability of pigs (FOR-2011-05-10-482) requires pigs to be identified as soon as possible on the holding of birth and no later than before the pig leaves this holding. Identification is with an ear tag or tattoo containing the holding identification number. If desired, the herd owner can, in addition, use an individual identification number. This is in accordance with Article 5(2) of Directive 2008/71/EC.
28. The same Regulation permits pigs moving directly to slaughter to be marked with a delivery number. The delivery number is a unique number allocated by slaughterhouses to their suppliers. Slaughterhouse operators retain a list correlating delivery number to the name and address of the farmer. The NFSA holds no equivalent list and must therefore request farmer details from the slaughterhouse in order to be able to trace pigs marked with a delivery number. This is not in accordance with Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 2008/71/EC.
29. The same Regulation includes a derogation allowing un-marked pigs to move from the holding of birth to a fattening unit as long as the fattening unit only receives pigs from a single supplier and the un-marked pigs are accompanied by a transport document. Before leaving the fattening unit, pigs must be marked as in point 27 or 28 above.
30. The NFSA confirmed that they do not know the number of pig holdings using the derogation to move un-marked pigs referred to in paragraph 29 and do not carry out any specific checks to verify its correct operation. The system is operated by slaughterhouse food business operators ('FBOs') who arrange for movement of pigs, notification of movements of pigs to MATS and ensure that contracts are in place between participating businesses.
31. On one farm receiving unmarked pigs, the audit team confirmed that the herd owner retained movement records showing the number of pigs moved on and off the holding with corresponding dates of movement and that the pigs were only sourced from a single breeding farm. In addition, the movements were accompanied by a commercial movement document.
32. The Regulation on traceability of pigs requires notification to MATS of all pig movements within seven days of movement. The receiver of pigs is responsible for reporting the total number of pigs moved, the unique producer number of the holding of origin and destination and the date of departure and arrival of the animals.
33. Data provided by the NFSA confirms that the seven-day deadline for notifications of movement of pigs is regularly exceeded. The NFSA confirmed that this is due to an interface problem between private slaughterhouses and MATS, resulting in movement notifications from private slaughterhouses not being recorded in MATS.

This issue has been ongoing since 2009 and involves movement of pigs to private slaughterhouses and between farms organised by private slaughterhouses. In 2018, over one third of pigs (~640 000) in Norway were slaughtered in private slaughterhouses and, consequently, their movements were not recorded in MATS.

34. There is no prescribed format for pig holding registers on individual farms in Norway and these tend to be based on copies of commercial documents, for example, sales invoices. On one holding visited by the audit team, no records were available on the farm to record the number of pigs present on the holding, the number of pigs entering and leaving or the dates of such movements. This is not in accordance with Article 4(1) and Article 4(2)(c) of Directive 2008/71/EC. In addition, the herd owner was unaware of his responsibilities relating to movement notifications (when a private slaughterhouse was not co-ordinating the movements) and official staff from the local veterinary office were also unsure of reporting requirements. Consequently, no pig movements to/from this holding had been recorded in MATS for over two years.
35. At another holding visited by the audit team which supplied pigs to a private slaughterhouse, no pig movements were recorded in MATS for the previous two years, despite movements off the holding for slaughter during this period.
36. MATS incorrectly records the majority of pig holdings as keeping outdoor pigs. The NFSA have requested staff at regional/department level to update MATS during routine visits to pig holdings.

5.3.4 *Personal luggage controls*

37. The NFSA has instructed the NVI to provide a risk assessment for the introduction of ASF to Norway. This was provided in February 2019. A report includes an assessment of the risk of introduction of ASF virus via infected meat and meat products and concludes, *inter alia*, that the likelihood of ASF virus positive pig products being introduced into Norway through personal imports is high. However, the likelihood of domestic pigs being exposed to an infective dose of ASF virus positive products in commercial pig herds was assessed as very low to negligible and, in low biosecurity herds, as very low.
38. Customs are responsible for enforcing controls related to personal imports. In the BIP visited by the audit team, the NFSA staff confirmed that twice per annum they provide training to customs staff which includes updates on ASF and joint searching of personal luggage. The audit team verified that the training material used during training included information on ASF.
39. At one BIP visited, the NFSA provided data demonstrating that in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (to 01/09/19), customs staff seized 1,340, 1,026 and 785 kilogrammes of products of animal origin (POAO) respectively as personal imports. Most of these seizures related to personal imports from non-EU countries. However, a small number of seizures originated in EU Member States and NFSA staff confirmed that they had no animal health based risk assessment to justify such seizures.
40. BIP staff receive a weekly CVO newsletter to update them on relevant issues. The audit team saw recent newsletters which included articles on ASF to raise awareness.

5.3.5 *Communication and involvement of relevant stakeholders*

41. The NFSA have run an extensive ASF communications campaign. This includes dissemination of information via, for example, the NFSA website, press releases, articles in professional journals, the use of social media and preparation of multilingual advice on biosecurity for pig farmers.
42. In addition, the NFSA have organised a number of meetings for farmers, hunters and private veterinarians to provide information on ASF. Despite these initiatives, not all private veterinarians, farmers or hunters met by the audit team were fully aware of the risks of ASF and how the disease can spread.

Conclusions on Preventive Measures

43. There is currently no national ASF strategy for wild boar population management in Norway and consequently the population is increasing in numbers and geographical distribution. This, together with the absence of any biosecurity requirements in hunting grounds, increases the risk of ASF spreading should it occur in wild boar.
44. There are national rules in place for biosecurity on pig holdings which include a recent requirement for biosecurity plans on all commercial holdings. Official controls of these rules are weakened by the fact that not all officials have been trained on how to assess compliance and to determine whether steps taken are adequate to prevent the introduction or spread of ASF.
45. The animal traceability system in place should, in principle, allow for the forward and backward tracing of pigs. However, severe deficiencies in registration of movement of live pigs which have been known for many years have not been addressed by the NFSA. In an outbreak situation, tracing of pigs may be delayed due to officials visiting farms with no pigs, the need to visit and manually check farm records of movements and reliance by officials on movement records kept by slaughterhouses.
46. Collaboration between the NFSA and customs should ensure that official control measures in place for personal imports of POAO reduce the risk of introduction of animal health diseases, including ASF, to Norway.

5.4 EARLY DETECTION

Legal Requirements

Article 4 of Directive 2002/60/EC

Article 12(2)(a) and Article 12(3) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC

Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC

Findings

5.4.1 *Training and awareness programmes*

47. A number of NFSA staff have attended the Better Training Safer Food (BTSF) course on contingency planning with ASF as the model disease. The audit team confirmed that at least one member of staff from each of the regions has attended such a course in the previous three years.

48. In one Department visited by the audit team, training records were available for a veterinarian interviewed, which confirmed that veterinarian's participation on two separate training courses where ASF was included on the agenda.

5.4.2 Surveillance in wild boar

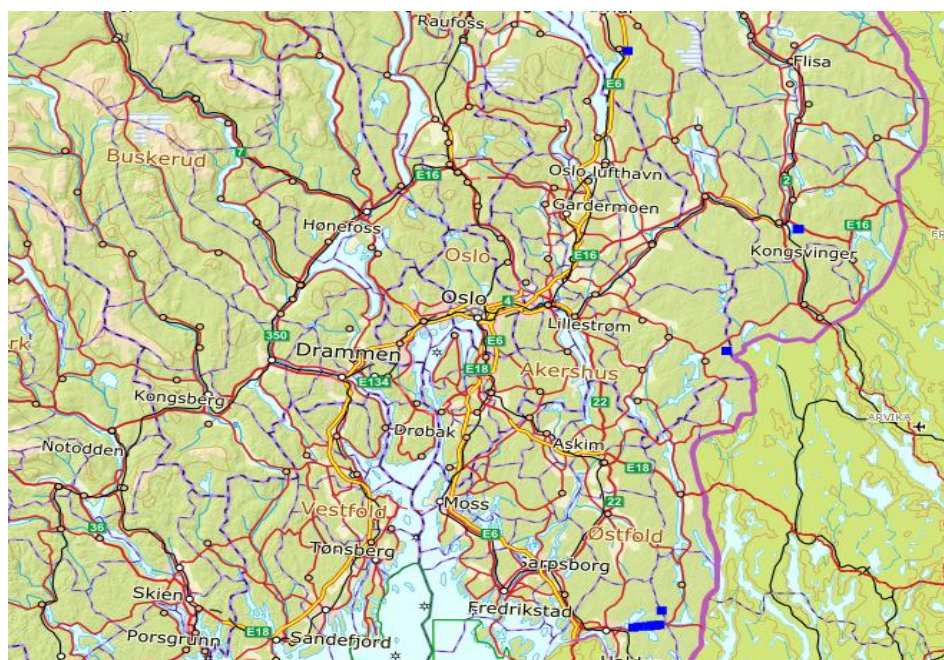
49. The NFSA confirmed, in the pre-mission document, that no wild boar had been sampled and tested for ASF since January 2017 or possibly earlier. This encompasses wild boar which have been hunted, killed as a result of road traffic accidents ('RTAs') or found dead in a forest.
50. The NEA confirmed that RTAs involving wildlife must be reported to the municipality via the road authorities. It is then the municipalities' responsibility to upload this information to a fallen stock database once per annum (<http://gammel.hjorteviltregisteret.no/Fallviltinnsyn>). It is only at this stage that NFSA can access the data to assess the number of wild boar killed in RTAs. In many Member States, RTAs are considered a good target for passive surveillance sampling and testing for ASF.

Figures 2 and 3 below show the numbers of wild boar RTAs and their location for the period 01/04/14 – 31/03/19.

Figure 2.

Hunting year	Number of RTAs involving wild boar
2014 / 15	2
2015 / 16	2
2016 / 17	2
2017 / 18	4
2018 / 19	7

Figure 3.



51. There are currently no incentives for hunters or members of the public to report wild boar found dead in the forest. Hunters interviewed by the audit team

considered that more publicity was necessary to increase awareness around reporting of dead wild boar.

5.4.3 *Surveillance in domestic pigs*

52. The NFSA confirmed that two suspicions of ASF were notified in domestic pigs during 2017. Both notifications originated in slaughterhouses and the audit team reviewed the files related to one of the suspicions. Following notification, officials from the Department where the suspect herd was located immediately restricted the herd and visited the holding. All pigs were examined with no clinical signs of ASF noted. A restriction notice was served listing the requirements to be met, including disinfection measures, restriction of pigs in their living quarters and a ban on pig carcasses leaving the holding except where authorised by the NFSA. These actions are in accordance with Article 4 of Directive 2002/60/EC.
53. On the same day as notification of the suspicion, the suspect carcass was sent from the slaughterhouse to NVI and a negative ASF test result was issued later that day.
54. In contrast, there have been no suspicions of ASF raised directly from farms in the last three years or possibly longer. On one commercial pig fattening holding visited by the audit team, there had been significant mortalities (10 percent) over a nineteen-day period before the herd owner alerted their private veterinarian. It was a further three days before the private veterinarian carried out a farm visit and a further six weeks before a definitive diagnosis was reached. Neither the herd owner nor the private practitioner alerted the NFSA to this disease event at any stage. The NFSA became aware of the event three weeks after the definitive diagnosis was reached as a result of NFSA staff in a slaughterhouse requesting a farm visit for welfare reasons.

5.4.4 *Laboratory testing*

55. The NVI in Oslo is Norway's national reference laboratory ('NRL') for ASF.
56. The NRL competence for diagnosing ASF has been assessed by means of external quality controls performed through annual participation (since 2005) in the ASF Inter-Laboratory Comparison Tests (ILCTs) organised by the European Reference Laboratory (EURL) for ASF.
57. The results of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 ILCTs for ASF confirmed that the assay systems used by the NRL for detection of antibodies against ASF and for detection of ASF virus in field samples are "fit for purpose".
58. The NRL has been accredited by Norway's national body for accreditation. Accreditation includes fulfilling the requirements of ISO 17025 and the listing of specific groups of tests which include, *inter alia*, a real time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for ASF. This fulfils the accreditation requirements of Article 12(2)(a) and Article 12(3) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.
59. NRL staff confirmed they had the ability to upscale ASF testing in an outbreak situation by, for example, re-allocation of staff and the introduction of obligatory overtime.

Conclusions on Early Detection

60. The NFSA has access to expertise and reliable diagnostic services for ASF at the

NVI.

61. Passive surveillance testing provides the most effective means for detection of ASF in wild boar and domestic pigs in non-affected countries. In slaughterhouses, the system appears sensitive with the correct procedures being followed when suspicions of ASF are notified. In contrast, there has been no passive surveillance sampling carried out in wild boar in Norway and no clinical suspicions notified during the last three years or possibly longer on domestic pig farms. This does not provide confidence that ASF would be detected at an early stage following any outbreak in hunting grounds or on a farm. This will delay the introduction of control measures leading to an increased likelihood of the disease spreading more extensively.

5.5 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR ASF

Legal Requirements

Articles 4, 5, 8, 21, 22 and Annex VI of Directive 2002/60/EC

Chapter II of Decision 2003/422/EC

Directive 92/119/EEC.

Findings

5.5.1 *National plan and operations manual*

62. The NFSA have an ASF contingency plan (version 26/06/19) which describes the specific measures to be implemented to prevent the introduction of ASF to Norway and also the measures required to handle suspicions and confirmed cases of ASF. This is supported by a) an administrative contingency plan which describes the administrative routines and their organisation and is applicable to all types of incidents; and b) a general contingency plan for animal diseases which describes in detail how to organise the work during an outbreak of notifiable animal disease.
63. The general contingency plan is applicable to all cases of contagious animal diseases and provides detailed instructions for specific tasks, for example, establishment of zones, depopulation and outlining the chain of command. The general contingency plan contains links to more detailed staff instructions, for example, action cards for specific scenarios such as what must be done in the first two hours after notification of a suspected disease outbreak and a field manual which gives detailed information on, *inter alia*, *post mortem* examination, sampling for ASF and recommended disinfectants for disease control. These arrangements meet the requirements of Article 21 of Directive 2002/60/EC.
64. The CA introduced a web based tool, MatCIM, for management of incidents in 2017. This includes modules for recording actions and drafting reports and allows access to contingency plans. The system is currently being updated to include a mapping function for the establishment of, for example, protection and surveillance zones. This function is currently performed by the NVI. Staff met were generally familiar with the use of MatCIM and the system appeared effective.
65. In one Department office visited by the audit team, an equipment store was established for disease outbreaks which contained emergency boxes to take to farms when investigating suspicions of notifiable diseases. These arrangements

were considered satisfactory, except that some of the sampling equipment was out of date.

66. The audit team noted that the case definition used in the ASF contingency plan² describing grounds for suspicion of ASF does not include abortion. This is contrary to the minimum criteria listed in Chapter II of Decision 2003/422/EC and may lead to delays in reporting suspicion of ASF.

5.5.2 Simulation exercises

67. In recent years, a number of ASF contingency exercises have been organised with the most recent in September 2019. These are in addition to exercises for other major epidemic diseases affecting terrestrial animals and which contribute to NFSA staff preparedness. The NFSA confirmed that the exercises are always reviewed and areas are identified for improvement, for example staff to be ready to visit suspect holdings within an hour of notification, improving private veterinary practitioner and farmer knowledge on ASF and improvement of biosecurity related to wild boar hunting. The audit team noted delays in implementation in certain areas such as hunting biosecurity (see point 18 and 19 above).

Conclusion on emergency preparedness

68. If a suspicion of ASF is notified, the emergency preparedness arrangements are likely to be effective. The contingency plan for ASF is generally robust, staff are trained, aware of their roles and capable to manage an outbreak.

5.6 VERIFICATION, SUPERVISION AND EXPERT GROUP

69. An internal NFSA audit on NFSA animal health emergency preparedness was completed in 2016 and resulted in a number of recommendations. The audit team were able to see that a number of corrective actions had since been taken – for example, introduction of a new platform for emergency preparedness (MatCIM) and practical arrangements related to emergency response equipment.
70. An ASF expert group, comprising NVI staff, has been established and meets on an *ad hoc* basis. This meets the requirements of Article 22(5) of Directive 2002/60/EC. This expert group has recently completed a risk assessment of introduction of ASF to Norway.
71. There are no official checks on the movement of un-identified pigs to verify the rules are being correctly applied. It is left to industry and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to implement such movements (See point 29 above).
72. In one region visited, the audit team saw a work plan for distribution of farm visits to Departments. It was explained that each Department has a co-ordinator to monitor completion of the tasks. At regional level, the completion of these tasks is further verified by a special animal health adviser.

Conclusions on verification, supervision and expert group

² In their response to the draft report, the Competent Authority noted they have now incorporated abortions into the case definition for ASF in their ASF contingency plan, chapter 7.1

73. There has been good use of expert groups to provide advice to the NFSA – for example, in relation to consequences of an increasing wild boar population in Norway and a risk assessment of the introduction of ASF to Norway. However, the suggested measures have not yet been implemented.

6 Closing meeting

A closing meeting was held on 25 September 2019 with representatives from the relevant competent authorities present. At this meeting, the audit team presented the main findings and preliminary conclusions. The CA did not indicate any disagreement with the findings and preliminary conclusions.

7 Recommendations

In order to facilitate the follow-up of the recommendations hereunder, Norway should notify the Authority no later than 24 January 2020 of additional corrective actions planned or already taken other than those already indicated in the reply to the draft report of the Authority. In case no additional corrective actions have been planned, the Authority should be informed of this. The Authority should be kept continuously informed of such changes made to the already notified corrective actions and measures, including changes to the deadlines indicated for completion and also the completion of the measures included in the timetable.

No	Recommendation
1	<p>Practical arrangements should be put in place to ensure that dead wild boar (including those killed in road traffic accidents) are notified for ASF sampling and testing in order to permit early detection of the presence of ASF in wild boar, should the disease occur.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC</p> <p>Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 61.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 49 and 50.</p>
2	<p>The NFSA should ensure that minimum requirements are in place for effective passive surveillance testing on pig holdings in order to ensure early detection of ASF. The effectiveness of these arrangements should be regularly reviewed.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC</p> <p>Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 61.</p>

	Associated finding: paragraph 54.
3	<p>The NFSA should ensure that the national database for animals can provide, at any time, the registration number of the last herd for groups of pigs.</p> <p>Article 14(3)(C)(3) of Directive 64/432/EEC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 45.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 33, 34 and 35.</p>
4	<p>Biosecurity requirements for hunting grounds should be gradually introduced and the NFSA should communicate the importance of these measures to hunters.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 43.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 18 and 19.</p>
5	<p>The NFSA should ensure that the MATS database includes the mark or marks, used on pigs, which permit the identification of the holding.</p> <p>Article 5(2) of Directive 2008/71/EC</p> <p>Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 2008/71/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 45.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraph 28.</p>

Annex 1 - List of abbreviations and terms used in the report

ASF	African Swine Fever
Authority	EFTA Surveillance Authority
CA	Competent authority
EC	European Community
EEA	European Economic Area
EEA Agreement	Agreement on the European Economic Area
EU	European Union
EURL	EU Reference Laboratory
ILCT	Inter-laboratory comparison test
MRSA	Methicillin resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>
NEA	Norwegian Environment Agency
NFSA	Norwegian Food Safety Authority
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRL	National Reference Laboratory
NVI	Norwegian Veterinary Institute
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction
RTA	Road traffic accident

Annex 2 - Relevant legislation

The following legislation will be taken into account in the context of this mission:

- a) The Act referred to at Point 74 in Part 1.2 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in the Member States*; as amended, and as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- b) The Act referred to at Point 11 in Part 1.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules*, as amended, and as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- c) The Act referred to at Point 9b in Part 3.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Council Directive 2002/60/EC laying down specific provisions for the control of African swine fever and amending Directive 92/119/EEC as regards Teschen disease and African swine fever*, as amended, and as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- d) The Act referred to at Point 7d in Part 1.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Council Directive 2008/71/EC on the identification and registration of pigs*, as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- e) The Act referred to at Point 57 in Part 4.2 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Commission Decision 2000/678/EC laying down detailed rules for registration of holdings in national databases for porcine animals as foreseen by Council Directive 64/432/EEC*, as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- f) The Act referred to at Point 28 in Part 3.2 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Commission Decision 2003/422/EC approving an African swine fever diagnostic manual*, as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- g) The Act referred to at Point 9 in Part 1.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Council Directive 96/93/EC on the certification of animals and animal products*, as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement;
- h) The Act referred to at Point 1 in Part 4.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Council Directive 64/432/EEC on health problems affecting intra-Community trade in bovine animals and swine*, as amended, and as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement; and
- i) The Act referred to at Point 9 in Part 3.1 of Chapter I of Annex I to the EEA Agreement, *Council Directive 92/119/EEC introducing general Community measures for the control of certain animal diseases and specific measures relating to swine vesicular disease*, as amended, and as adapted to the EEA Agreement by the sectoral adaptations referred to in Annex I to that Agreement.

Annex 3 - Comments from Norway to the draft report

EFTA Surveillance Authority
Rue Belliard 35
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium

Your ref: 83239
Our ref: 2019/112858
Date: 12.11.2019
Org.no: 985 399 077

Att. Att. James Allan Ross

Norwegian Food Safety Authority

**EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY'S MISSION TO NORWAY FROM 16 TO 25 SEPTEMBER 2019 ON AFRICAN SWINE FEVER – COMMENTS TO DRAFT REPORT**

Thank you very much for a thorough and instructive report.
We appreciate this opportunity to comment on your draft report.

Comments to the draft report

We have comments in the following points:

10: It stands National Veterinary Institute instead of *Norwegian Veterinary Institute*.

12. The NFSA confirmed that the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food have ordered the NFSA and the NEA to jointly prepare a management plan for ASF in wild boar by 1 November 2019.

14. Feeding of wild boar is permitted in Norway. NEA are currently consulting on a Regulation to prohibit feeding wild boar and only permit baiting (the provision of limited food for attracting wild boar for hunting).

15. NEA confirmed that there is no closed period for hunting wild boar and that they can be hunted throughout the year. The hunting season runs from 1 April to 31 March the following year. There is no limit on the hunting bag (number of wild boar actually shot) and the only restriction is that a female wild boar with a piglet under six months old cannot be hunted, although the piglet itself can be hunted.

26. The NFSA confirmed that the holding identification number takes the format ww / xx / yyyy / zz which indicates respectively, county number, municipality number, farm number and the person responsible for the animals.

66. The audit team noted that the case definition used in the ASF contingency plan describing grounds for suspicion of ASF does not include abortion. This is contrary to the minimum criteria listed in Chapter II of Decision 2003/422/EC and may lead

Norwegian Food Safety Authority
Seksjon dyrehelse

Official in charge: Solfrid Åmdal
Phone: +4722400000
E-mail: postmottak@mattilsynet.no
(Remember recipients name)

Postal address:
Felles postmottak, P.O. Box 383
N - 2381 Brumunddal
Telefax: +47 23 21 68 01

www.mattilsynet.no

to delays in reporting suspicion of ASF.

We have now incorporated abortions in the main criteria in our plan, chapter 7.1:

<https://matcim.no/file.php?fid=e86207f36b90cf587381000e62e7dbbfzfid>

Additional documents

Please, find attached a plan for the corrective measures and actions.

Yours Sincerely

Anne Marie Jahr

Head of Section
Animal Health Section
Head Office
Norwegian Food Safety Authority

Annex 4 - Plan for corrective measures provided by Norway

ESA Inspection African Swine Fever september 2019			
No	Recommendations/subject	Action	Time aspect
1	<p>Practical arrangements should be put in place to ensure that dead wild boar (including those killed in road traffic accidents) are notified for ASF sampling and testing in order to permit early detection of the presence of ASF in wild boar, should the disease occur.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC</p> <p>Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 61.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 49 and 50.</p>	<p>The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) will improve the passive surveillance for ASF in wild boar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By continuing to inform the municipalities, hunters, hunters organization, road authorities and the public in general that all wild boar found dead or sick should be tested for ASF. - Wild boar killed or injured in road traffic accidents will be included in the health surveillance program for wild boar. They will also be tested for ASF. The samples will be taken by local members of the fallen game tracking group or the NFSA. Information and training will be provided. - The "Action plan against wild boar" will also propose measures to encourage reporting of dead wild boars to the NFSA. The implementation of these measures will depend on the approval and implementation of the Action plan. 	01.07.2020. Will start as soon as possible, but some measures will take time to implement.
2	<p>The NFSA should ensure that minimum requirements are in place for effective passive surveillance testing on pig holdings in order to ensure early detection of ASF. The effectiveness of these arrangements should be regularly reviewed.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC</p> <p>Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 61.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraph 54.</p>	<p>The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) will improve the passive surveillance for ASF in pig holdings by continuing to inform the veterinary practitioners and farmers about the symptoms of ASF and when and how to notify the NFSA. NFSA inspectors of animal health will be reminded to check identification of pigs, biosecurity of the farm and perform a verification of the owner data during inspections for animal health. In case of suspicion samples for laboratory investigations should be taken.</p>	01/07/2020
3	<p>The NFSA should ensure that the national database for animals can provide, at any time, the registration number of the last herd for groups of pigs.</p> <p>Article 14(3)(C)(3) of Directive 64/432/EEC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 45.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 33, 34 and 35.</p>	<p>NFSA will continue working towards the private slaughterhouses to improve and modernize the exchange of data into the database.</p>	01/01/2021
4	<p>Biosecurity requirements for hunting grounds should be gradually introduced and the NFSA should communicate the importance of these measures to hunters.</p> <p>SANTE/7113/2015-Rev 10– Strategic approach to the management of African swine fever for the EU</p> <p>Article 3 of Council Directive 92/119/EEC</p> <p>Chapter II to the Annex of Commission Decision 2003/422/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 43.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraphs 18 and 19.</p>	<p>Recurrent awareness campaigns for hunters on biosecurity will be carried out for :hunters who are hunting abroad , foreign hunters coming to Norway to hunt, and for hunters moving from one hunting area to another in Norway . The hunting areas in Norway are not well organized. In the Action plan against wild boar, measures to improve organizing of hunting and hunting areas are proposed. This will facilitate introduction of biosecurity requirements for hunting grounds.</p>	01.07.2022 (Half way through the period for the Action plan).
5	<p>The NFSA should ensure that the MATS database includes the mark or marks, used on pigs, which permit the identification of the holding.</p> <p>Article 5(2) of Directive 2008/71/EC</p> <p>Article 3(1)(a) of Directive 2008/71/EC</p> <p>Recommendation based on conclusion at paragraph 45.</p> <p>Associated finding: paragraph 28.</p>	<p>NFSA will ensure that MATS database includes the mark or marks used on pigs.</p>	31/12/2022