Annex 14

**USA COMMENTS IN RED FONT**

Chapter 12.2.

INFECTION *WITH* *Taylorella equigenitalis* (Contagious equine metritis)

Article 12.2.1.

General provisions

This chapter addresses the occurrence of clinical or asymptomatic *infection* of a mare caused by *Taylorella equigenitalis* as well as the presence of *T. equigenitalis* on the genital mucous membrane surface in the male horse.

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code,* the following defines *infection* with *T. equigenitalis:*

1) *T. equigenitalis* has been isolated and identified as such from a genital swab sample from a horse; or

2) nucleic acid specific to *T. equigenitalis* has been ~~identified~~ detected in a sample from a horse; or

3) ~~antigen or genetic material~~antigen specific to *T. equigenitalis* has been ~~identified~~ detected in a sample from a ~~mare~~ horse showing clinical or pathological signs consistent with *infection* with *T. equigenitalis*, or epidemiologically linked to a confirmed or suspected *case* of *infection* with *T. equigenitalis*~~;~~.

~~3)~~ ~~genetic material specific to~~ *~~T. equigenitalis~~* ~~has been identified in a sample from a male horse.~~

For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*:

‒ due to long-term persistence of *T. equigenitalis* in horses, in the absence of effective treatment, the *infective period* shall be lifelong;

‒ the *incubation period* in mares shall be 14 days.

Standards for diagnostic tests ~~and vaccines~~ are described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

For the purposes of this chapter, a temporary importation refers to the introduction of horses into a country or *zone*, ~~for competition or cultural events excluding breeding,~~ for a defined period of time, not exceeding 90 days, during which the *risk* of transmission of the *infection* is mitigated through specific measures under the supervision of the *Veterinary Authority.* Temporary imported horses are re-exported at the end of this period. The duration of the temporary importation period and the destination after this period, as well as the conditions required to leave the country or *zone,* should be defined in advance.

When authorising the importation or transit of the *commodities* listed in this chapter, with the exception of those listed in Article 12.2.2., *Veterinary Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in this chapter relevant to the *T. equigenitalis* status of the *exporting country*, *zone* or *~~establishment~~herd*.

Article 12.2.2.

Safe commodities

When authorising importation or transit of the following *commodities*, *Veterinary Authorities* should not require any *T. equigenitalis*-related conditions, regardless of the *~~T. equigenitalis~~**~~infection~~ animal health status* of ~~the~~ *~~animal population~~* ~~of~~ the *exporting country*, *zone* or *~~establishment~~herd*:

1) geldings;

2) *milk* and *milk products*;

3) *meat* and *meat products*;

4) hides and skins;

5) hooves;

6) gelatine and collagen.

Article 12.2.3.

~~Establishment~~Herd free from infectionwith *T. equigenitalis*

1) Prerequisite

*Infection* with *T. equigenitalis* has been a *notifiable disease* in the entire country for at least the past two years.

2) Qualification

To qualify as free from *infection* with *T. equigenitalis*, a~~n~~ *~~establishment~~ herd* should satisfy the following conditions:

a) it is under the control of the *Veterinary Authority;*

b) no *case* has occurred for at least two years;

c) all horses from the *~~establishment~~herd* have been subjected to *T. equigenitalis* tests, with negative results, on samples collected ~~These tests should have been carried out~~ on three occasions~~,~~ within a 12-day period, with an interval of no less than three days ~~apart~~ between ~~each tests~~sample collections. Horses must have not been treated with antibiotics for at least 7 days prior to the first sampling, nor subjected to antiseptic washing of genital mucous membrane for at least 21 days ~~before~~ prior to the first sampling;

d) any stored semen was subjected to a test for detection of ~~genetic material~~nucleic acid of ~~to detect~~ *T. equigenitalis* with negative results, carried out on an aliquot of the stored semen.

3) Maintenance of freedom

a) the requirements in points 1 ~~and~~, 2(a) and 2(b) of Article 12.2.3. are met;

b) appropriate *surveillance*~~,~~ capable of detecting *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* even in the absence of clinical signs~~,~~ is in place; this may be achieved through a *surveillance* programme in accordance with Chapter 1.4. and this chapter;

c) the introduction of horses and their ~~germplasm~~ germinal products into the *~~establishment~~herd* is carried out in accordance with the importation conditions for these *commodities* listed in this chapter.

4. Recovery of freedom

When a *case* is detected in a previously free *~~establishment~~herd* the free status ~~of the~~ *~~establishment~~* should be suspended until the following conditions are met~~in the affected~~ *~~establishment~~*:

a) the *disinfection* of the *establishment* has been applied;

b) not before 21 days after the last removal or the last treatment of an infected horse, all horses have been subjected to a *~~T. equigenitalis~~*test for the detection of the agent, with negative results, on samples collected on three occasions, within a 12-day period with an interval of no less than three days ~~apart~~ between ~~each tests~~sample collections;

c) any fresh semen from all infected horses in the *herd* has been destroyed; aliquots of each collection of stored semen from all infected horses in the *herd* ~~was~~ were subjected to a test ~~to detect~~ for detection of ~~genetic material~~nucleic acid of *T. equigenitalis* with negative results ~~in accordance with Article 12.2.8., carried out on an aliquot of the stored semen~~; and all positive stored semen has been destroyed;

d) the introduction of horses and their ~~germplasm~~ germinal products into the *~~establishment~~herd* is carried out in accordance with the importation conditions for these *commodities* listed in this chapter.

Article 12.2.4.

Recommendations for importation of stallions or mares

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that:

1) mares showed no clinical sign of *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* on the day of shipment;

AND

2) horses have been ~~kept in an~~ *~~establishment~~*:

a) kept since birth or for at least two years prior to shipment in a~~n~~ *~~establishment~~herd* that has been free from *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* ~~since birth or for at least two years prior to shipment~~;

OR

b)

i) kept for at least the last 60 days in a~~n~~ *~~establishment~~herd* in which no *case* has been reported during that period ~~the 60 days prior to shipment~~**;**

AND

ii) ~~were~~ subjected to tests for the detection of the agent*~~T. equigenitalis~~* ~~tests~~, with negative results, carried out on samples collected on three occasions~~,~~ within a 12-day period, with an interval of no less than three days ~~apart~~ between ~~each tests~~sample collections, ~~being~~ the last ~~test~~one being carried out within ~~the~~ 30 days prior to shipment. Horses ~~must not~~ have not been treated with antibiotics for at least ~~21~~ 7 days nor subjected to antiseptic washing of genital mucous membranes for at least 21 days prior to the first sample collection,~~ing~~ and have not been mated or inseminated after the first sampling.

Article 12.2.5.

Recommendations for temporary importation of stallions and mares~~orses~~

When importing on a temporary basis stallions or mares ~~horses~~ that do not comply with recommendations in Article 12.2.4. for purposes ~~different~~ other than breeding and rearing, *Veterinary Authorities* should:

1) require:

a) the ~~animals~~horses ~~to~~ be accompanied by a passport in accordance with the model contained in Chapter 5.12., or other identification system accepted by the receiving competent authority, or be individually identified as belonging to a high health status *subpopulation* as defined in Chapter 4.17. ;

**RATIONALE:** USA recommends that this be more inclusive of other forms of reliable, accurate, and verifiable identification that is documented and recognized by competent authorities. Not all countries use passports or recognize high health status subpopulations. As written, a horse must either have a passport or be part of a “high health status subpopulation.” Many countries, including the U.S., do not have equine passports and a “high health status subpopulation” is not yet defined or accepted. The language proposed would allow identification in line with what many trading partners accept now.

b) the presentation of *an international veterinary certificate* attesting that the mares showed no clinical sign of *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* on the day of shipment;

c) the duration of the temporary importation period ~~and~~, the destination after this period, and the conditions required to leave the country or *zone* ~~to~~ be defined;

2) ensure that during their stay in the country or *zone*, the ~~animals~~horses:

a) are not used for breeding (including artificial insemination, semen collection, use~~d~~ as teasers ~~stallions~~) and do not have any sexual contact with other horses;

b) ~~do not undergo any genital examinations~~are not subjected to any practice that may represent a risk of transmission of *infection* with *T. equigenitalis*;

c) are kept and transported individually in stalls and *vehicles/vessels* which are subsequently cleaned and disinfected before re-use.

Article 12.2.6.

Recommendations for importation of semen ~~of~~ from ~~horses~~stallions

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that:

1. semen was collected in an *approved* centre and collection, processing and storing ~~was~~ were done in accordance with Chapter 4.6; and

EITHER

2) the donor stallion was kept in a~~n~~ *~~establishment~~herd* free from *infection* with *T. equigenitalis*;

OR

3)

a) the donor stallion was kept for at least 60 days prior to semen collection in a~~n~~ *~~establishment~~herd* in which no *case* has been reported during that period~~the 60 days prior to semen collection~~; and

b) the donor stallion was subjected to tests for the detection of the agent*~~T. equigenitalis~~* ~~tests~~, with negative results, carried out on samples collected on three occasions, within a 12-day period with an interval of no less than three days ~~apart~~ between ~~each tests~~sample collections, ~~being~~ the last ~~test~~one being carried out within ~~the~~ 30 days prior to shipment. ~~The donor stallion must not have been treated with antibiotics for at least 21 days prior to sampling~~ Horses have not been treated with antibiotics for at least ~~21~~ 7 days nor subjected to antiseptic washing of genital mucous membranes for at least 21 days prior to the first sample collection,~~ing~~ and have not been mated or inseminated after the first sampling;

OR

4) aliquots of fresh semen were subjected to culture and a test for detection of ~~genetic material~~nucleic acid ~~for~~ of *T. equigenitalis* with negative results, carried out immediately prior to processing and on an aliquot of semen collected within 15 ~~to~~ –30 days after the first collection of the semen to be exported;

OR

5) aliquots of ~~frozen~~ stored semen corresponding to the ~~earliest~~ oldest and the most recent collection were subjected to culture and a test for detection of ~~genetic material~~nucleic acid for *T. equigenitalis* with negative results.

Article 12.2.7.

Recommendations for importation of oocytes or embryos of horses

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that:

1. the oocytes and embryos were collected, processed and stored in *approved* centres following the general provisions in accordance with Chapters 4.8, 4.9. and 4.10.;
2. the donor mare showed no clinical signs of *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* on the day of collection;

AND

for the importation of embryos:

3) the semen used for embryo production complied with Article 12.2.6. and Chapters 4.6. and 4.7.

Article 12.2.8.

Surveillance

1) General principles of surveillance

*Surveillance* for *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* is relevant for *establishments* seeking to achieve and demonstrate freedom from *infection*, as well as being part of an *official control programme* in countries where the disease is endemic.

The *surveillance* strategy chosen should be adequate to detect ~~the~~ *infection* with *T. equigenitalis* even in the absence of clinical signs.

The *Veterinary Services* should implement programmes to raise awareness among ~~farmers~~ owners, breeders and workers who have day-to-day contact with horses, as well as *veterinarians*, *veterinary paraprofessionals* and diagnosticians, who should report promptly any suspicion of *infection* with *T.* *equigenitalis* to the *Veterinary Authority.*

Under the responsibility of the *Veterinary Authority*, Member Countries should have in place an *early warning system* in accordance with Article 1.4.5. and ~~:~~

~~a)~~ ~~a formal and ongoing system for detecting and investigating~~ *~~cases~~*~~;~~

~~b)~~ ~~a procedure for the rapid collection and transport of samples from suspected~~ *~~cases~~* ~~to a~~ *~~laboratory~~* ~~for diagnosis;~~

~~c)~~ a system for recording, managing and analysing diagnostic and *surveillance* data.

2) Clinical surveillance

Clinical *surveillance* aims at detecting clinical signs by close physical examination of horses and based on ~~reproduction~~ reproductive performance. However, clinical *surveillance* should be complemented by culture for *T. equigenitalis* ~~bacteriological~~ and molecular ~~tests~~testing, as asymptomatic carriers play an important role in the maintenance and transmission of the *infection*.

3) Agent surveillance

An active programme of *surveillance* of horses to detect *case*s should be implemented to establish the status of a country, *zone* or *~~establishment~~herd*. Culture for *T. equigenitalis* and molecular testing are the most effective methods of detection of ~~the~~ a *case.*

Stored semen should be included in *surveillance* programmes. It represents a valuable source of material and may be very helpful in contributing to retrospective studies, including providing support for claims of freedom from *infection* and may allow certain studies to be conducted more quickly and at lower cost than other approaches. Samples can be gathered through representative sampling or following a *risk*-based approach.

4) Serological surveillance

Serological *surveillance* is not the preferred strategy for detecting *T. equigenitalis.* If used, serology should be ~~used~~ done in conjunction with agent identification ~~culture~~ in assessing the status of a mare that may have been infected with *T. equigenitalis*. The usefulness of serological tests is further described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

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