

EADRA GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Interpretation of Containment in the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement

INTRODUCTION

This guidance document is provided to Parties to the *Government and Livestock Industry Cost Sharing Deed in respect of Emergency Animal Disease Responses* (EADRA) for use in the interpretation of processes and for a common understanding of the terminology used in this Deed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Purpose of this guidance document	1
2. Background	1
3. Definitions (from the EADRA).....	2
4. Context and Approach	3
5. Discussion.....	4
6. Interpretation of Containment (AHC).....	5

1. PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide an interpretation of the term “containment” for use in the EADRA and in the control of an Emergency Animal Disease (EAD).

This guidance document should be read in conjunction with the EADRA.

2. BACKGROUND

The EADRA contains several references to the terms “containment” or “contained”. Wherever they appear in the context of disease control, the terms are used in combination with “eradication” or “eradicated”. The most common use is “eradication or containment”, but there are also references to “eradication and containment”, “containment or eradication” and “eradication/containment”, and “eradicated or contained” and “contained or eradicated”, respectively.

The terms “containment/contained” and “eradication/eradicated” are not defined in the EADRA. The meaning of “eradication/eradicated” is reasonably clear. This is not necessarily the case with “containment/contained”, which has led, at times, to misunderstandings and

potential confusion as to precisely what is meant by “containment” when used in connection with the application of the EADRA.

Parties to the EADRA have thus far not been in favour of defining these terms within the EADRA.

3. DEFINITIONS (FROM THE EADRA)

The following definitions in the EADRA are useful in the subsequent discussion:

In the EADRA, unless the contrary intention appears, an:

“EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE” (EAD)

is a disease that has met one or more of the following criteria:

- (a) It is a known disease that does not occur in endemic form in Australia, including without limitation the diseases listed in **Parts 1.2 to 1.5 inclusive of Schedule 3**, and for which it is considered to be in the national interest to be free of the disease.
- (b) It is a variant form of an endemic disease which is itself not endemic, caused by a strain or type of the agent, which can be distinguished by appropriate diagnostic methods, and which if established in Australia, would have a national impact.
- (c) It is a serious infectious disease of unknown or uncertain cause, which may on the evidence available at the time, be an entirely new disease, or one not listed in the categorised disease list set out in **Parts 1.2 to 1.5 inclusive of Schedule 3**.
- (d) It is a known endemic disease, but is occurring in such a fulminant outbreak form (far beyond the severity expected), that an emergency response is required to ensure that there is not either a large-scale epidemic of national significance or serious loss of market access.¹

PHASES OF AN EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE RESPONSE

The Phases of an Emergency Animal Disease Response are described in clause 6 of the EADRA as follows:

- **Incident Definition Phase**

This is the investigation period following Formal Notification to the CCEAD², as defined in **clause 5.1**, of an Incident. It continues until:

- an EAD Response Plan (EADRP) is agreed by the NMG³ following a determination by CCEAD that the incident relates to an EAD that is capable of being eradicated or contained; or

¹ see clause 2.1

² Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases – see clause 12.2

- the NMG, acting on a recommendation of the CCEAD, determines that:
 - the Incident does not relate to an EAD; or
 - the Incident does relate to an EAD but the EAD is not capable of being eradicated or contained.

- **Emergency Response Phase**

This is the period from agreement by the NMG (on advice from the CCEAD) on an EADRP until the NMG determines (on advice from the CCEAD) that the EAD has been contained or eradicated or cannot be eradicated or contained. This is the period during which the EADRP is performed.

- **Proof of Freedom Phase**

This is the period following determination by the NMG that the EAD has been contained or eradicated. This period may include research and/or surveillance activities and will end when the NMG determines (on advice from the CCEAD or OIE⁴) that the EADRP has been successful.

- **New outbreaks**

Where there is an Incident which occurs after a determination by the NMG (on advice from CCEAD) of containment or eradication in accordance with clause 6.3, it will be treated as a new Incident and the three Phases described above will apply.

4. CONTEXT AND APPROACH

The issue of the definition of “containment” was first raised during the first five-year review of the EADRA in 2007. There has been further discussion since then, including during the second five-year review of the EADRA in 2012.

Plant Health Australia has had to deal with a similar lack of definition of “containment” in the sister document – the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD). Signatories to the EPPRD resolved this issue in 2012 through adding a new definition of “emergency containment” to the EPPRD to provide the required clarity. [See [Appendix A](#): Definition of “emergency containment” in the EPPRD]

At the EADRA Workshop in March 2012, representatives of EADRA Parties rejected the proposal to introduce a similar definition for “emergency containment” for the EADRA. Instead, they favoured the proposal to use the existing interpretation developed by Animal Health Committee (AHC) during the discussions over the last few years to provide guidance on the definition of “containment”.

AHA developed a synthesised interpretation of “containment” as viewed by AHC (this Guidance Document). Representatives of EADRA Parties endorsed this document at the EADRA Workshop in March 2013.

³ National Management Group – see clause 12.1

⁴ World Organisation for Animal Health

5. DISCUSSION

AHC has developed advice in connection with the issue of the definition of “containment” for the purposes of the EADRA.

Key considerations during this development included:

- the definition of an EAD in the EADRA
- the definition of the phases of an EAD response
- Australia’s experience of containment during the course of the responses to, for example, equine influenza, anthrax and small hive beetle
- the discussion surrounding the inclusion into the EADRA of post weaning multisystemic wasting syndrome as an EAD
- AHC’s understanding of the intention of the Parties at the time the EADRA came into being.

From this range of considerations, AHC provided advice and an interpretation for the development of a definition for what containment is, and also for what it is not.

AHC was of the understanding that the purpose of the Deed, when agreed by the Parties, was that containment is not the application of ongoing control measures to prevent the spread, limit the spread, or limit the rate of spread of an EAD that cannot be eradicated.

The Emergency Response Phase of an incident runs from the point of agreement by the NMG (on advice from the CCEAD) on an EADRP until the NMG determines (on advice from the CCEAD) that the EAD has been contained or eradicated or cannot be eradicated or contained. This is the period during which the EADRP is performed.

Once the NMG concludes that eradication is no longer possible, the EADRA is deactivated and all the associated cost sharing arrangements are also automatically terminated.

The transition of response management once the EADRA ceases to apply is also a well recognised issue that needs to be addressed. Transition to long term containment, management and/or business as usual need to be comprehensively understood and actively managed if any gains made during the EAD response are to be maintained and to maximise future options for management. This is especially true for the period immediately after the EADRA ceases to apply. The length of this period will depend on the particular circumstances but could be several months or longer.

The National Biosecurity Committee, which has government representation only, is currently examining:

- the need for a governance framework to support transition programs beyond eradication

- the generic elements for a successful transition program
- how industry could be engaged in the development of the framework
- how industry could be engaged in specific transition programs when these are required.

This initiative may prove useful in providing a framework for the transition from emergency management through interim management and into long term management. Budgeting, funding and potential cost sharing within this arrangement will be an issue for future discussion and negotiation and are outside the scope of this guidance document.

6. INTERPRETATION OF CONTAINMENT (AHC)

In the context of the EADRA “containment” means:

- **For an EAD that is normally exotic to Australia**

The implementation of those agreed measures necessary to prevent or limit the spread of the EAD to unaffected areas, while incident definition and eradication measures are implemented that are aimed at a return to country freedom.

Containment continues until either the disease is eradicated in accordance with an agreed EADRP, or until a decision is made not to eradicate the disease and an alternative approach to eradication is agreed.

- **For an EAD that is normally present in Australia or parts of Australia, (but which has occurred in an unusual or fulminating form)**

The implementation of those agreed measures necessary to prevent or limit the spread of the EAD, while control measures are being implemented, with those containment and control measures remaining in place until the disease returns to the normal state for that disease, or to an agreed new normal state.

In the context of the EADRA “containment” does NOT mean:

- **The indefinite implementation of measures to prevent or limit the spread of a disease that has become established in a part of Australia and that has been agreed will not be, or cannot be, eradicated. Containment does not mean the indefinite regionalisation of a disease that has been agreed cannot be, or will not be, eradicated.**

Appendix A: Definition of “emergency containment” in the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD)

Emergency Containment means a set of measures implemented by the Lead Agency as part of an Emergency Plant pest (EPP) response. It is intended to restrict the EPP to a defined area, and may include the use of quarantine measures, in order to prevent further spread of the EPP and preserve the opportunities for Eradication of the EPP.

See link below:

<http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/go/phau/epprd>