AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY EMERGENCY PLAN

AUSVETPLAN

Guidance document

Declared areas and allocation of premises classifications in an emergency animal disease response

Version 5.2

AUSVETPLAN is a series of response plans that describe the proposed Australian approach to an emergency animal disease incident. The documents provide guidance based on sound analysis, linking policy, strategies, implementation, coordination and emergency management plans.

National Biosecurity Committee

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If you have any requests or inquiries concerning reproduction and rights, or suggestions or recommendations, you should address these to:

AUSVETPLAN – Animal Health Australia
PO Box 998
Dickson ACT 2602
ausvetplan@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

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Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 This document

1.1.1 Purpose

As part of AUSVETPLAN (the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan), this guidance document has been developed to assist personnel involved in an emergency animal disease (EAD) response to define declared areas and determine premises classifications. The definitions and information in this guidance document are also to be used by EAD response personnel when determining appropriate control measures (including movements within and between declared areas and premises).

Together with the other components of AUSVETPLAN, this guidance document has been developed to help ensure that an efficient, effective and coherent response can be implemented consistently across Australia with minimal delay.

1.1.2 Scope

This guidance document:

- describes declared areas and how they are defined, implemented and removed
- describes other types of nondeclared areas used for disease control purposes
- describes the process whereby premises classifications are allocated
- describes the flow of the transition of premises classifications from one classification to another, as an EAD response unfolds
- provides default definitions for specific classifications to be used in AUSVETPLAN
- provides guidance and information for training purposes.

This guidance document has an emphasis on control measures required for highly contagious diseases such as equine influenza and foot-and-mouth disease. Declared areas might not be used in all responses, and premises classifications may need to be modified for diseases not in this category (e.g. Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus).

Control measures for specific diseases are described in the relevant AUSVETPLAN response strategy.

1.1.3 Development

This manual has been produced in accordance with the procedures described in the **AUSVETPLAN *Overview*** and in consultation with Australian national, state and territory governments; the relevant livestock industries; nongovernment agencies; and public health authorities, when relevant.

1.2 Other documentation

This guidance document should be read and implemented in conjunction with:

- other AUSVETPLAN documents, including the response strategies; operational, enterprise and management manuals; and any relevant guidance and resource documents. The complete series of manuals is available on the Animal Health Australia website[1]
- relevant nationally agreed standard operating procedures (NASOPs). These procedures complement AUSVETPLAN and describe in detail specific actions undertaken during a response to an incident. NASOPs have been developed for use by jurisdictions during responses to EAD incidents and emergencies
- relevant jurisdictional or industry policies, response plans, standard operating procedures and work instructions
- relevant Commonwealth and jurisdictional legislation and legal agreements (such as the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement,[2] when applicable).

1.3 Training resources

1.3.1 EAD preparedness and response arrangements in Australia

The Emergency Animal Disease Foundation Online course[3] provides livestock producers, veterinarians, veterinary students, government personnel and emergency workers with foundation knowledge for further training in EAD preparedness and response in Australia.

[1] www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents
[2] https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/emergency-animal-disease/ead-response-agreement
[3] https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au/increasing-member-response-capability

2 Summary

2.1 Overview of declared and other areas

Both declared and other areas may be used to assist in the management of an emergency animal disease (EAD) incursion.

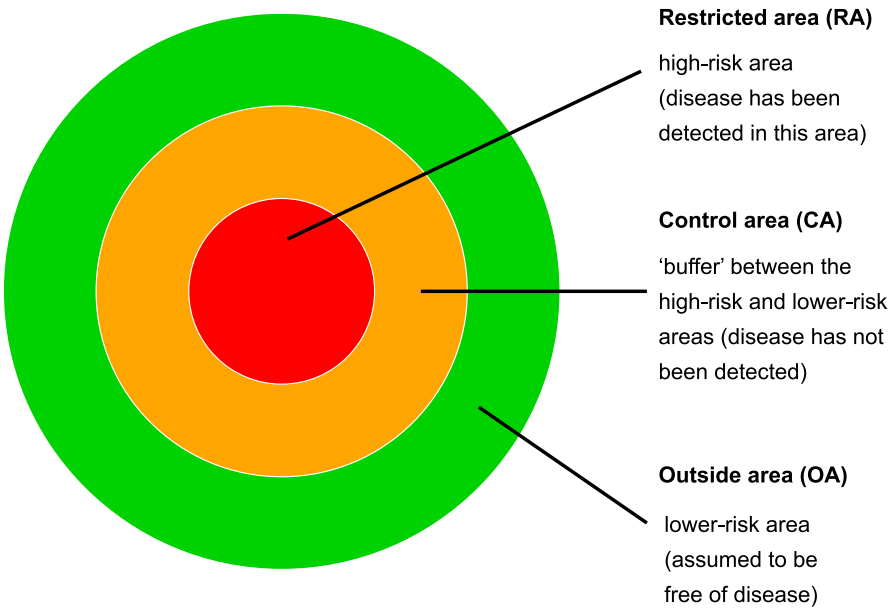


Figure 2.1 Schematic illustration of declared areas indicating level of risk and presence/absence of disease

Control measures and movement restrictions in an area will be proportional to the disease transmission risk, which varies between diseases. Control measures and movement restrictions will usually be more stringent in the higher-risk areas. Movement restrictions are more prohibitive when moving from higher-risk areas to lower-risk areas.

2.1.1 Declared areas

Declared areas are declared under jurisdictional biosecurity legislation to enable specified activities to be required, restricted or prohibited to best contain, control and/or eradicate an EAD.

Declared areas include:

- restricted areas (RAs), which are subject to strict disease control measures
- control areas (CAs), which act as disease-free buffers between RAs and the parts of Australia that are free of the EAD (the outside area, OA).

Less-contagious diseases (e.g. Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus) do not use declared areas as part of their control measures. See the applicable AUSVETPLAN response strategies for details.

2.1.2 Other areas

Other areas may be declared under jurisdictional legislation and may be referenced in AUSVETPLAN.

Some jurisdictions have the legislative powers to implement additional declared areas in which specified activities are legally required or prohibited. Other areas may be recommended during a response to provide structure and guidance on movement controls, surveillance, vaccination and so on.

Jurisdictions that put in place other areas must include a clear description of the are in their emergency animal disease response plan (EADRP) to ensure that the purpose of the other areas and their roles in the EAD response are clear to the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD) and National Management Group (NMG). The description must also clearly state what declared and/or other areas will be used and what requirements will apply in each area. The jurisdiction should also consider including the same description in relevant communications (e.g. web content, situation reports).

These other areas may be nested within, or overlie part or all of, other areas (declared or not). Other areas may include:

- outside areas (OAs) — for example, the parts of Australia outside of RAs and CAs, in which the EAD has not been detected
- transmission areas
- infected areas
- surveillance areas
- vaccination areas
- wild animal management areas.

Jurisdictional legislation will set out who has the legislative authority to sign declared area legislative instruments. Depending on the legislation, these powers may reside with a minister, chief veterinary officer (CVO), or their delegates.

2.2 Overview of case numbers and classifications

2.2.1 Case numbers

The affected jurisdiction and, specifically, the investigation function at the state coordination centre (SCC) or local control centre (LCC), as appropriate, are responsible for allocating case numbers to premises, and for classifying and reclassifying premises. The respective SCC or LCC planning technical analysis epidemiology function may provide advice on premises classifications. New infected premises (IP) and dangerous contact premises (DCP) classifications must be confirmed with the CVO or delegate.

A case number may be assigned to a premises or any other unit of interest (on an as-needs basis) identified within the network[4] of the EAD being managed (see Section 2.2.2).

Premises that are assigned a case number may include those that:

- hold susceptible animals (e.g. farms, saleyards, showgrounds)
- are primary processors of susceptible animals (e.g. abattoirs, renderers)
- are processing or storage facilities for products (e.g. milk or egg processors and factories, wool handling and storage facilities)
- are secondary processors of products from susceptible animals (e.g. retail butchers, small goods producers) unless the product has already been treated or processed in a manner that would inactivate the EAD before arrival at the processing site).

In exceptional cases, other units of interest that do not meet the definition of standard premises may need to be identified and assigned a case number. Units of interest use the standard premises classifications TP and DCP.

Units of interest that may require classification commensurate with the needs of a response may include:

- transporters and, transport depots where trucks carrying potentially infected stock and animal products are stored, or through which livestock may move
- milk tankers
- veterinarians and other personnel of specific interest that move between properties.

All premises (or units of interest) with a case number are assigned a premises classification for disease control management and monitoring purposes.

The case number remains associated with that premises throughout the response, although the premises may be reclassified over time (see also Section 4.3). The premises is referred to using its case number followed by its current classification. For example, 32IP is the 32nd premises to be sequentially numbered and has been assessed as an IP at a given point in time. As control measures are completed, it may be reclassified to 32RP and finally to 32ARP (if holding susceptible animals and in the RA) or 32ZP (if there are no susceptible animals).[5]

[4] The network is any premises (including transport depots) or conveyance identified in connection, or likely to be in connection, with the EAD incident.

[5] ZP = zero susceptible species premises

2.2.2 Premises classifications

A specific premises must be allocated only one premises classification at a given time. The classifications, their abbreviations and their relevant area are in Table 1 (in alphabetical order).

Table 1 Premises classifications

Classification	Restricted area	Control area	Outside area
Approved disposal site (ADS)	✓	✓	—[a]
Approved processing facility (APF)	✓	✓	—[a]
At-risk premises (ARP)	✓	—	—
Dangerous contact premises (DCP)	✓	✓	—[a]
Dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF)	✓	✓	—[a]
Infected premises (IP)	✓	—	—
Premises of relevance (POR)	—	✓	—
Premises with susceptible species (PSS)	—	—	✓
Suspect premises (SP)	✓	✓	✓[b]
Trace premises (TP)	✓	✓	✓[b]
Resolved premises (RP)	✓	✓	—
Unclassified processing facility (UPF)	✓	✓	✓
Unknown status premises (UP)	✓	✓	—
Zero susceptible species premises (ZP)	✓	✓	—

a These premises may be first identified in the OA, and when classified as an ADS, APF, DCP or DCPF, should prompt consideration of reclassification of the relevant part of the OA (for example, to be included in the current RA or established as a separate RA) and/or other control options such as enhanced biosecurity measures, movement controls, and surveillance.

b These premises may be first identified in the OA, and if confirmed as an IP or DCP, should prompt reclassification of the premises and reclassification of the relevant part of the OA — for example, to be included in the current RA or established as a separate RA.

2.3 Overview of qualifiers

2.3.1 Qualifiers

In addition to premises classifications, the following qualifiers describe the outcome of a recent investigation, epidemiological risk assessment or other activities on premises where the premises classification has not changed. Qualifiers are intended for internal use only (i.e. for response personnel) and should not be communicated externally because of the potential for confusion — the application of the assessed negative qualifier may cause a producer to incorrectly believe that their premises status has changed.

Jurisdictions that use qualifiers must include in their EADRP a clear description of how they are used to ensure a clear understanding by the CCEAD and NMG. The jurisdiction should also consider including the same description if it is used in internal relevant communications (e.g. situation reports, incident action plans).

Assessed negative (AN)

A qualifier that may be applied following surveillance, epidemiological investigation and/or laboratory assessment/diagnostic testing. It indicates that the premises is assessed as negative at the time of application. It may be used as an operational tool to document progress in the response and during the proof-of-freedom phase.

Vaccinated (VN)

A qualifier that, for some diseases, should be used to identify a premises that contains susceptible animals that have been vaccinated, according to the response strategy, against the EAD in question.

Sentinels on site (SN)

A qualifier that may be applied to IPs to indicate that sentinel animals are present on the premises as part of response activities.

2.4 Use of declared areas and premises classifications in an EAD incident

When an EAD incident is first suspected, the premises involved will undergo a clinical and/or epidemiological investigation. If the case definition, as defined in the relevant AUSVETPLAN response strategy, is met[6] (i.e. the index case – see **Glossary**), the relevant chief veterinary officer or their delegate will declare the premises an IP. After identification of the first IP, an RA and a CA may be declared.[7,8] Other areas may also be declared or defined, if appropriate (e.g. transmission area for vectorborne disease).

Where infection is identified in wild or feral animals, an epidemiological investigation and planned response activities will determine if it is appropriate to define an infected area (IA).

Declared and other areas may change in size and shape commensurate with the needs of the response.

All premises classifications are subject to change as a result of a modification in the case definition(s) or as the response proceeds. A premises will have only one classification at a time. A premises may be reclassified after an epidemiological investigation, clinical assessment, risk assessment or completion of control measures.

Once the first IP has been identified, intelligence gathering through veterinary and epidemiological investigations are likely to lead to the identification of SPs, DCPs, DCPFs and TPs. These will be high priority for follow-up investigation by the relevant state or territory authorities because these premises could serve as sources of pathogen spread. Other premises and conveyances may also be identified as part of tracing, surveillance and investigations.

Classifications should be applied. They should be based on sound epidemiological knowledge and aim to support information needs of managers. They should assist managers to identify future field operations and allow for monitoring and reporting of the progress of the response. The areas, premises classifications and premises qualifiers to be used should be agreed upon early in a response, so that control centre personnel can apply consistent classifications and definitions from the outset of the investigation and response. If using areas or premises classifications not described in full in this guidance document, a description of their use must be given in the EADRP.

[6] Note that case definitions are under development for some manuals. Also, some diseases could be present without showing clinical signs.

[7] This is likely the case with contagious diseases (e.g. equine influenza, avian influenza, African swine fever, classical swine fever) but may not apply to less-contagious diseases (e.g. Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus).

[8] For highly contagious diseases, such as foot-and-mouth disease, strong suspicion or confirmation of infection on a premises will prompt declaration of a livestock standstill area that may be part or all of the jurisdiction. Following cessation of the livestock standstill, it will be replaced by RA(s) and CA(s) and other areas, as appropriate.

3 Area definitions

3.1 Area definitions

3.1.1 Restricted area (RA)

A relatively small legally declared area around infected premises and dangerous contact premises that is subject to strict disease controls and intense surveillance. The limits of a restricted area and the conditions applying to it can be varied during an incident according to need.

An RA may be drawn around each geographic cluster of infected premises (IPs) and dangerous contact premises (DCPs) and the associated premises assessed as potentially at risk of infection due to local or windborne spread. It should also include as many suspect premises (SPs), trace premises (TPs) and dangerous contact processing facilities (DCPFs) as practicable. Based on risk assessment, the RA is subject to intense surveillance, and biosecurity and movement controls. The relevant AUSVETPLAN response strategy may provide further guidance on the criteria used to determine the appropriate size of the RA. The purpose of an RA is to provide legislative authority to conduct disease control, containment, surveillance and eradication activities.

The RA does not need to be circular and can have an irregular perimeter. The boundaries will be modified as new information becomes available — for example, from tracing and surveillance. The boundary of the RA will be adjusted as confidence about the extent of the incident increases. It will take into account the relevant World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) Terrestrial animal health code chapter on the disease. The actual distance in any one direction will be determined by factors described in the relevant AUSVETPLAN response strategies and may include terrain; the pattern of susceptible-species movements and concentrations; the weather (including prevailing winds); the distribution and movements of relevant wild (including feral) animals; and known characteristics of the disease agent. In practice, major geographical features and landmarks, such as rivers, mountains, highways and roads, are frequently used to demarcate boundaries of RAs. It may be convenient to declare the RA on the basis of local government areas; however, this may not be practicable, as such areas may be larger than the circumstances require. Multiple RAs may exist within one CA or there may be multiple RAs within multiple CAs.

3.1.2 Control area (CA)

A legally declared area that acts as a disease-free buffer[9] between the restricted area and the outside area (the limits of a control area and the conditions applying to it can be varied during an incident according to need) where the disease controls and movement controls applied are of lesser intensity than those in a restricted area.

A CA acts as a disease-free buffer between the RA and the outside area (OA). Specific biosecurity and movement controls and surveillance strategies will be applied within the CA to maintain its disease-free status and prevent spread of the disease into the OA. If multiple RAs are declared, a CA may surround all the RAs or one or more CAs may be declared around each RA or around a group of clustered RAs.

A CA may also be used in non-infected jurisdictions to implement biosecurity and movement controls on susceptible species and their products for as long as is necessary to complete tracing and epidemiological studies, and to identify risk factors and forward and backward risk(s).

The CA will be a relatively large declared area around the RA(s) — for example, initially it may be as large as the state or territory. The size and shape of the CA will be informed by consideration of the factors specified in the relevant AUSVETPLAN response/disease strategy. The actual distance in any one direction will be determined by factors such as terrain; the pattern of susceptible species movements and concentrations; the weather (including prevailing winds); the distribution and movements of relevant wild (including feral) animals; and known characteristics of the disease agent. In practice, major geographical features and landmarks, such as rivers, mountains, highways and roads, are frequently used to demarcate the boundaries of the CA. The boundary will be adjusted as confidence about the extent and distribution of the incident increases.

In general, biosecurity and movement controls will be less intense in the CA than in the RA. Disease-susceptible animals and their products are more likely to be permitted to move under permit within and from the CA than the RA; however, controls will be as per the relevant AUSVETPLAN response strategy.

[9] The use of the term 'disease free' implies that disease is not known to occur within the geographic area described by the CA.

3.1.3 Outside area (OA)

The area of Australia outside the restricted and control areas.

The OA is **not** usually a declared area but is used to describe the rest of Australia outside the declared areas. The OA will be subject to surveillance. Because it is highly desirable to maintain the OA as disease free, the movement of animals and commodities from the infected area (IA), RA and CA into the OA will be restricted.

The OA will be of interest for zoning,[10] and declared areas and the OA will be of interest for purposes of trade access, as well as for disease control (see below).

Jurisdictions with flexible biosecurity legislation may impose biosecurity controls by declaring an OA.

3.1.4 Infected area (IA)

An area on which wild/feral animals meeting the case definition are or were present, or the causative agent of the emergency animal disease is present, or there is a reasonable suspicion that either is present, and that the relevant chief veterinary officer or their delegate has determined to be an infected area. The area may be subject to wild/feral animal disease controls, including, as necessary, destruction, disposal and decontamination activities, vaccination, intense surveillance and movement controls.

The minimum size of the IA would likely be the estimated roaming range of infectious wild/feral animals while shedding virus (including preclinical shedding).

The IA may or may not be applied, depending on the situation. The IA is likely only to be declared when planned response control activities require legislative authority. The IA is an additional tool that jurisdictions may use to assist with operational response control activities on unfenced lands (e.g. crown land, national parks, heritage sites). Such activities may include:

- biosecurity controls, including quarantine, movement controls and enhanced biosecurity measures
- managed susceptible wild/feral animal destruction, disposal and decontamination activities
- vaccination (e.g. oral rabies vaccination)
- recreational activities (e.g. hunting, hiking, camping, boating, cycling)
- other activities deemed necessary to manage disease risk including containing or controlling the disease and limiting spread.

[10] The process of defining, implementing and maintaining disease-free and infected areas, in accordance with WOAH standards. Zoning is based on geopolitical and/or physical boundaries and surveillance, to facilitate disease control and/or trade.

3.1.5 Transmission area (TA)

The TA is an area, not usually legally declared, that is used for vectorborne diseases for epidemiological purposes, recognising that vectors are not confined by property boundaries.

An increased level of surveillance and control measures are likely to be observed within the TA.

The TA will be drawn around known sources of infection, as evidenced by:

- presence of disease
- presence of infected vectors
- any other confirmation of active transmission.

This distance will depend on the information gained about vector numbers, distribution and competence, environmental factors (e.g. prevailing winds, rainfall, temperature, humidity), and the number and distribution of infected and susceptible animals.

3.1.6 Other types of areas

It is possible that other types of areas (e.g. vaccination areas or surveillance areas), which may or may not be legally declared, may be used for disease control purposes in some jurisdictions.

3.2 Guidelines for reclassifying previously declared areas (RAs and CAs)

Maintaining movement restrictions on areas for long periods has important implications for resource management, animal welfare, business continuity, and socioeconomic impacts on producers and regional communities.

A large or jurisdiction-wide CA may be declared as a precaution at the start of an outbreak. The CA may be revoked or reduced in size to match the outbreak circumstances when initial tracing and epidemiological analysis is complete.

During the course of an emergency animal disease (EAD) response, it may become necessary for a CA or RA to be expanded, or new RAs and CAs declared, as additional geographical areas or new foci of infection are identified. Later in the response, as control is achieved, mechanisms for gradually reducing the size of the CA and RA can be introduced.

An EAD may involve multiple foci of infection, with several jurisdictions potentially involved. Since disease might be controlled at different rates in different areas, there may be the opportunity to progressively lift restrictions on an area basis. This would involve reclassifying previously declared areas (RAs and CAs), with a staged approach to lifting of movement restrictions. This is a key step in the recovery process and will have positive benefits for the community.

The lifting of restrictions in declared areas is managed by jurisdictions according to their local legislation, regulations and processes.

The key principles for reclassifying a previously declared area during a response should include the following, noting that not all will be relevant for some diseases:

- the area should be epidemiologically distinct from other declared areas
- all TPs and SPs have been reclassified, and all IPs, DCPs and DCPFs in the area have been reclassified as resolved premises (RPs)
- all tracing and surveillance associated with EAD control have been completed satisfactorily, with no evidence or suspicion of infection in the area
- a minimum period of x days[11] has elapsed since predetermined disease control activities and risk assessment were completed on the last IP or DCP in the area
- an approved surveillance program (including the use of sentinel animals, if appropriate) has confirmed no evidence of infection in the RA (see below)
- for vectorborne diseases, vector monitoring and absence of transmission studies indicate that vectors are not infective.

Lifting of restrictions is a process managed by the relevant chief veterinary officer under jurisdictional legislation and consistent with the most current agreed emergency animal disease response plan. When the appropriate conditions are satisfied, an affected jurisdiction can, in consultation with the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD), reduce the size of the RA or lift all restrictions. The previous part of the RA would then become part of the CA. Jurisdictions should be able to present documented evidence that the appropriate conditions have been met.

[11] The minimum period uses, or is based on, the disease-specific incubation periods defined by WOAH — two incubation periods is a common guideline.

When an RA is lifted and becomes part of the CA, it will have a lower-risk status, and the movement restrictions that apply will be consistent with those applying within the CA. Over time, all of the RAs will be reduced and lifted.

If more than one jurisdiction is affected, each will use its own appropriate legal jurisdictional mechanisms to lift the declaration of the RA or CA, coordinating with each other and consulting with the CCEAD to ensure wide communication and coordination.

After a further period of surveillance and monitoring, and provided that the additional surveillance and monitoring finds no evidence of infection, a jurisdiction, in consultation with the CCEAD, could lift the CA. This would result in the lifting of all the remaining regulatory controls associated with the response.

4 Premises classifications

A premises is a geographically defined tract of land including its buildings. A premises may be represented geospatially (e.g. on maps) as a polygon for whole or parts of a property, or as a centroid to identify the entire property.

A premises may be part of, or an entire property.

Premises with a case number are assigned a premises classification for disease control management and monitoring purposes. As such, a premises is an epidemiological unit for disease control purposes.

On an exceptional basis and subject to a risk assessment, a property may be divided into multiple, discrete biosecure epidemiological units. These units may then be reclassified as separate premises for disease control purposes. An epidemiological unit may define the extent of the premises.

4.1 Classifications

For the purposes of disease control management and monitoring, premises are classified according to their risk profile. Similarly, units of interest may be classified according to their risk profiles; however, units of interest would only be applied when the unit of interest is considered a trace or dangerous contact. Although units of interest do not meet the standard premises definition, the principles of applying a case number and classification commensurate with their risk profile allows them to be identified as a TP or DCP.

4.1.1 Infected premises (IP)

A premises on which animals meeting the case definition are or the causative agent of the emergency animal disease is present, or there is a reasonable suspicion that either is present, and that the relevant chief veterinary officer or their delegate has declared to be an infected premises.

A premises with susceptible animals that have met the case definition will be declared an IP.

For most diseases, the classification of a premises as an IP would be followed by the declaration of the areas around it as an RA and a control area (CA). For most diseases, the restricted area(s) (RAs) should include all IPs. In the case of vectorborne diseases, a transmission area (TA) may also be identified, if required.

When the required control measures for an IP have been completed, the premises would be classified as a resolved premises (RP).

A premises may be further reclassified when appropriate; the further classifications include:

- zero susceptible species premises (ZP), if destocked
- at-risk premises — vaccinated (ARP-VN), if susceptible species are present and vaccinated
- at-risk premises (ARP).

4.1.2 Suspect premises (SP)

An interim classification of a premises that contains one or more susceptible animals showing clinical signs similar to the case definition, and that therefore requires investigation.

Every effort should be made to investigate and reclassify an SP as soon as possible. SPs are considered a very high priority for veterinary investigations. The investigation and risk assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- if the case definition is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP
- if the case definition is not confirmed but suspicion remains, the premises would continue to be classified as an SP, until further investigation determines its reclassification
- if the investigation shows no evidence of the emergency animal disease (EAD), the premises would be reclassified appropriately.

For most diseases, as many of the SPs as possible should be included within the RA/s.

4.1.3 Trace premises (TP)

Interim classification of a premises that tracing indicates may have susceptible animals that have been exposed to the disease agent, or contains potentially contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires investigation.

For most diseases, as many of the TPs as possible should be included in the RA/s. Every effort should be made to investigate and reclassify a TP as soon as possible. Exposure may occur from animal movements, contaminated material, vehicles, equipment and fomites, as well as via aerosol. The investigation and an epidemiological assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- if the case definition is met, the premises would be classified as an IP
- if it appears highly likely that the disease is present and that the TP is highly likely to contain one or more infected animal, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, even though there are no clinical signs, the premises would be classified as a dangerous contact premises (DCP) or a dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF)
- if the investigation shows no evidence of the EAD, the premises can be reclassified appropriately.

4.1.4 Dangerous contact premises (DCP)

A premises, apart from an abattoir, knackery or milk or egg processing plant (or other such facility) that, after investigation and based on a risk assessment, is considered to contain one or more susceptible animals not showing clinical signs, but is considered highly likely to contain one or more infected animals and/or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires action to address the risk.

The RA(s) should usually contain all the DCPs. If a DCP is sufficiently distant from any IP that it is outside the existing RAs, this could trigger the extension of an RA to include it. However, it may prove impractical to extend an RA if the DCP is quite distant from the existing RA. The trigger to declare a separate RA may not be made until the DCP is identified as an IP or following a risk assessment. In these cases, it is possible that a DCP would be situated within a CA. It is also possible, but not preferred that a DCP may be first identified in the OA. This should prompt reclassification of the relevant parts of the OA and/or implementation of other control options on the premises such as enhanced biosecurity measures, movement controls, and surveillance. Given the importance of maintaining the disease-free status of the OA any decision involving a DCP within the OA should carefully consider the potential implications, including those related to trade access.

Whether an RA is drawn around a DCP depends on whether the transmission risk can be contained on the premises using premises-specific measures, or whether there is a need for RA measures to be applied as well, involving surrounding properties in heightened surveillance and tighter movement controls. The characteristics of the disease and its behaviour will be the major determinants. The risk assessment would consider these, as well as the stage of the response, the animal(s) present and the local situation.

Although susceptible animals on such premises are not showing clinical signs, they are highly likely to have been exposed to the disease agent — this might be via one or more infected animals; a vector; contaminated animal products, wastes or things; or another transmission mechanism. If susceptible animals on a premises were exhibiting clinical signs that were similar to the case definition, the premises must be classified as an SP or an IP. Depending on the disease response policy, neighbouring premises where no movements are recorded (and therefore are not TPs) may be classified as DCPs.

Since a DCP presents an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, such premises are subject to appropriate control measures, including ongoing epidemiological monitoring, risk assessment and investigation, as required. The investigation and an epidemiological assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- if the presence of an infected animal, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP
- if their presence is not confirmed but the likelihood is considered to remain high, the premises would continue to be classified as a DCP until completion of control and or surveillance measures enables it to be reclassified as an RP. A subsequent risk assessment would allow it to be reclassified
- if the investigation shows no evidence of the EAD, the premises can be reclassified appropriately.

4.1.5 Dangerous contact processing facility (DCPF)

An abattoir, knackery, milk or egg processing plant or other such facility that, based on a risk assessment, appears highly likely to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires action to address the risk.

Since a DCPF presents an unacceptable risk to the response if the risk is not addressed, such premises are subject to appropriate control measures, including ongoing epidemiological monitoring, risk assessment and investigation, as required. The investigation and an epidemiological assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- if the presence of an infected animal, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things is confirmed, the premises would be classified as an IP. This could include cases in which a DCPF is used as part of disease control measures to destroy animals from an IP

- if their presence is not confirmed but the likelihood is considered to remain high, the premises would continue to be classified as a DCPF until completion of control measures such as destruction and decontamination enables it to be reclassified as an RP. A subsequent risk assessment may allow it to be reclassified as an approved processing facility (APF) if approved biosecurity measures are maintained, an unclassified processing facility (UPF) if approved biosecurity measures are not in place, or a ZP, if the enterprise is no longer operational in any way within the scope of the response

- if it is considered unlikely that an infected animal, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things are present, the premises would be reclassified appropriately.

Although the intention is that DCPFs are located within RAs, there may be situations in which a DCPF that is sufficiently isolated from premises of relevance (PORs) is located in the CA. It is also possible, but not preferred that a DCPF may be first identified in the OA. This should prompt reclassification of the relevant parts of the OA and/or implementation of other control options on the premises such as enhanced biosecurity measures, movement controls, and surveillance. Given the importance of maintaining the disease-free status of the OA any decision involving a DCPF within the OA should carefully consider the potential implications, including those related to trade access.

The use of the DCPF classification may be applied to processing facilities that maintain approved biosecurity standards and are approved to process animals from premises that may have infected animals such as infected premises (IP), trace premises (TP), dangerous contact premises (DCP) or suspect premises (SP) (e.g. for process slaughtering of animals not known to be infected, but possibly may be subclinically infected) or from premises that do not meet the biosecurity conditions to have animals processed at an APF. The DCPF classification would be applied to the processing facility following receipt of such animals and indicates that the processing facility may have received infected animals, and that action is required to address the risk. This may include segregating potentially contaminated animals and product from other animals or product at the facility, decontamination of the facility and enhanced biosecurity controls around all movements associated with the facility.

Although classified as processors, it should be noted that the routine operation of licensed milk processing facilities may pose a risk profile different from those of other processing facilities in this category and this should be considered in response planning. Such factors include that:

- licensed milk processing facilities must not have or allow animals within the facility and must document the procedures of keeping them from the facility or eliminating them. This also applies to farmhouse dairy manufacturers that produce and process their own milk

- milk processing facilities require the containment of raw milk at all times, and regular decontamination.

4.1.6 Approved processing facility (APF)

An abattoir, knackery, milk or egg processing plant or other such facility that maintains approved biosecurity standards. Such a facility could have animals or animal products introduced from lower-risk premises under a permit for processing to an approved standard.

Before being classified as an APF, a premises is assessed to confirm that it has not received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and is operating according to agreed biosecurity standards.

If, during the course of a response, the premises is suspected to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, it will be reclassified as a DCPF pending further investigation.

An investigation and an epidemiological assessment may produce the following outcomes:

- if the case definition is met, the premises would be classified as an IP
- if it appears highly likely that the disease is present and that the APF is highly likely to contain one or more infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, even though there are no visible clinical signs, the premises would be classified as a DCPF
- if the investigation shows no evidence of the EAD and biosecurity requirements are met, the status of APF will be re-established.

4.1.7 Approved disposal site (ADS)

A premises that has zero susceptible animals and has been approved as a disposal site for animal carcasses, or potentially contaminated animal products, wastes or things.

4.1.8 At-risk premises (ARP)

A premises in a restricted area that contains one or more live susceptible animals but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, dangerous contact premises, dangerous contact processing facility, suspect premises or trace premises.

Animals on an ARP are subject to disease control procedures, such as regular surveillance and movement restrictions, that are appropriate to the RA. The susceptible animals are considered to be at ongoing heightened likelihood of infection.

4.1.9 Premises of relevance (POR)

A premises in a control area that contains one or more live susceptible animals but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, dangerous contact premises, dangerous contact processing facility, suspect premises or trace premises.

Animals on a POR are subject to disease control procedures, such as regular surveillance and movement restrictions, that are appropriate to the CA.

4.1.10 Resolved premises (RP)

An infected premises, dangerous contact premises or dangerous contact processing facility that has completed the required control measures and is subject to the procedures and restrictions appropriate to the area in which it is located.

Later in a response, as control measures on IPs, DCPs and DCPFs are completed, the premises are reclassified to RP, and their risk status is progressively reviewed.

After appropriate investigation and risk assessment, an RP will become an ARP, POR, ZP or APF.

4.1.11 Unknown status premises (UP)

A premises where the current presence of susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things is unknown.

UP can be used as a default status in a response until there is sufficient information to reclassify it.

If an investigation and epidemiological risk assessment on a UP confirmed:

- the presence of susceptible animals and excluded the presence of an EAD or the causative agent of the EAD, the UP would be reclassified as an ARP if in the RA, or a POR if in the CA and a premises with susceptible species (PSS) if in an OA
- that it contained no susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things, the UP would be reclassified as a ZP
- the presence of an infected animal (as per the case definition), or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, the premises would be classified as an IP
- clinical signs in susceptible species similar to the case definition, the UP would be reclassified as an SP
- an epidemiological link to a risk premises, the UP would become a TP
- a high-risk epidemiological link but without clinical signs of an EAD, the UP would be reclassified as a DCP or DCPF.

4.1.12 Unclassified processing facility (UPF)

An abattoir, knackery, milk or egg processing plant or other such facility where the current presence of susceptible animals and/or risk products, wastes or things is unknown.

UPF can be used as a default status in a response until there is sufficient information to reclassify it.

If an investigation and epidemiological risk assessment on a UPF confirmed:

- the presence of an infected animal (as per the case definition), or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, the premises would be classified as an IP
- clinical signs similar to the case definition, the UPF would be reclassified as an SP
- an epidemiological link to a risk premises, the UPF would become a TP
- that the facility, based on a risk assessment, appears highly likely to have received infected animals, or contaminated animal products, wastes or things, and that requires action to address the risk, the UPF would be reclassified as a DCPF
- that the facility contained no susceptible animals or risk products, wastes or things, and is operating according to approved biosecurity standards, the UPF would be reclassified as an APF.

4.1.13 Zero susceptible species premises (ZP)

A premises that does not contain any susceptible animals.

If it is restocked it becomes an ARP if in the RA, or a POR if in the CA and PSS if in an OA.

4.1.14 Premises with susceptible species (PSS)

A premises in the outside area that contains one or more live susceptible animals or other units of interest, but is not considered at the time of classification to be an infected premises, dangerous contact premises, dangerous contact processing facility, suspect premises or trace premises.

The animal(s) on such premises are not subject to disease control procedures, unless otherwise specified in AUSVETPLAN response strategies or jurisdictional emergency animal disease response plans.

4.2 Qualifiers

4.2.1 Assessed negative (AN)

AN is a qualifier that may be applied to premises previously defined as SPs, TPs, DCPs or DCPFs. The qualifier may be applied following surveillance, epidemiological investigation, and/or laboratory assessment/diagnostic testing, and indicates that the premises is assessed as negative at the time of classification. Once assessed negative, SPs, TPs, DCPs and DCPFs can be reclassified to another status — for example, an SP that has been investigated and whose animals tested negative can be changed to an SP-AN and then be reclassified as an ARP or POR (based on its location in an RA or a CA). The animals on such premises are subject to the procedures and movement restrictions appropriate to the declared area (RA or CA) in which the premises is located.

AN is a description to document progress in the response and in the proof-of-freedom phase. The AN qualifier is a temporary status and only valid at the time it is applied. The time that the AN qualifier remains active will depend on the circumstances and will be decided by the jurisdiction. The AN qualifier should also provide a trigger for future surveillance activity to regularly review, and change or confirm, a premises status.

The AN qualifier can also function as a counting tool to provide quantitative evidence of progress, to inform situation reports in control centres during a response. It provides a monitor for very high-priority premises (SPs and TPs) as they undergo investigation and risk assessment, and are reclassified, as well as a measure of surveillance activity overall for ARPs and PORs.

The AN qualifier can be applied in a number of ways, depending on the objectives and processes within control centres. The history of each premises throughout the response is held in the information system; the application of the AN qualifier is determined by the jurisdiction, the response needs and the specific processes to be followed in a local control centre.

4.2.2 Sentinels on site (SN)

SN is a qualifier that may be applied to IPs and DCPs to indicate that sentinel animals are present on a premises as part of response activities (i.e. before it can be assessed as an RP).

The qualifier should not be applied to premises that have been resolved and have been allowed to restock (regardless of the stocking density chosen for initial restocking).

4.2.3 Vaccinated (VN)

The VN qualifier can be applied in a number of different ways.

At its most basic level, it can be used to identify premises that contain susceptible animals that have been vaccinated against the EAD in question.

However, depending on the legislation, objectives and processes within a jurisdiction, the VN qualifier may be used to track a range of criteria and parameters (see example below under Definition and monitoring of vaccination). The details would need to be developed and tailored to meet individual needs of jurisdictions and circumstances.

The AN and VN qualifiers may be used together if surveillance, an epidemiological assessment and/or laboratory assessment/diagnostic testing support the premises as being assessed as negative and susceptible animals on the premises have also been vaccinated against the EAD.

Some of the issues that could be included for consideration are detailed below.

Definition and monitoring of vaccination

The vaccination status of a population of animals or premises might be important when considering movement controls.

For the purposes of AUSVETPLAN, the following guidance should be followed.

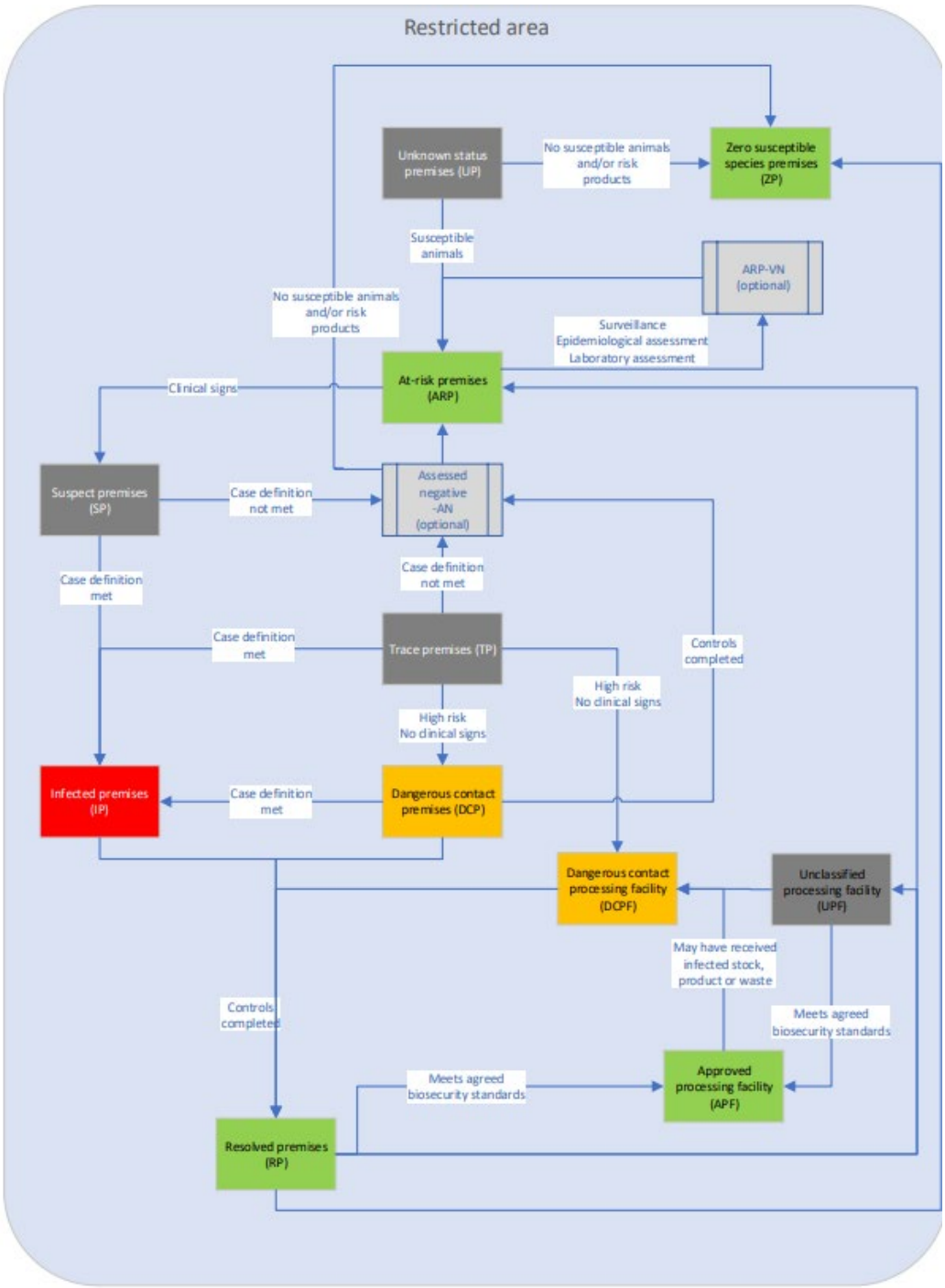
To be referred to as a vaccinated population, the population must have been vaccinated in accordance with:

- the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) registered label particulars, or
- APVMA-approved permit instructions relating to an approved EADRP for off-label use or use of an unregistered immunobiological product(s), or
- instructions of the relevant chief veterinary officer.

A mechanism for recording and monitoring primary and booster vaccinations for all vaccinated animals should be part of the disease control monitoring system, to provide information on the control of the outbreak as well as evidence for proof of freedom. For example, jurisdictions may choose to add numbers to the qualifiers to indicate primary (VN1) or booster (VN2) vaccinations.

4.3 Possible flow of premises classification over the course of an EAD incident

The possible flow for transition of premises classifications over the course of an EAD incident is illustrated in Figures 4.1 and 4.2, for RAs and CAs, respectively. These flowcharts represent how a particular premises may be reclassified over the course of a response and do not represent the relationship between premises at any one time.

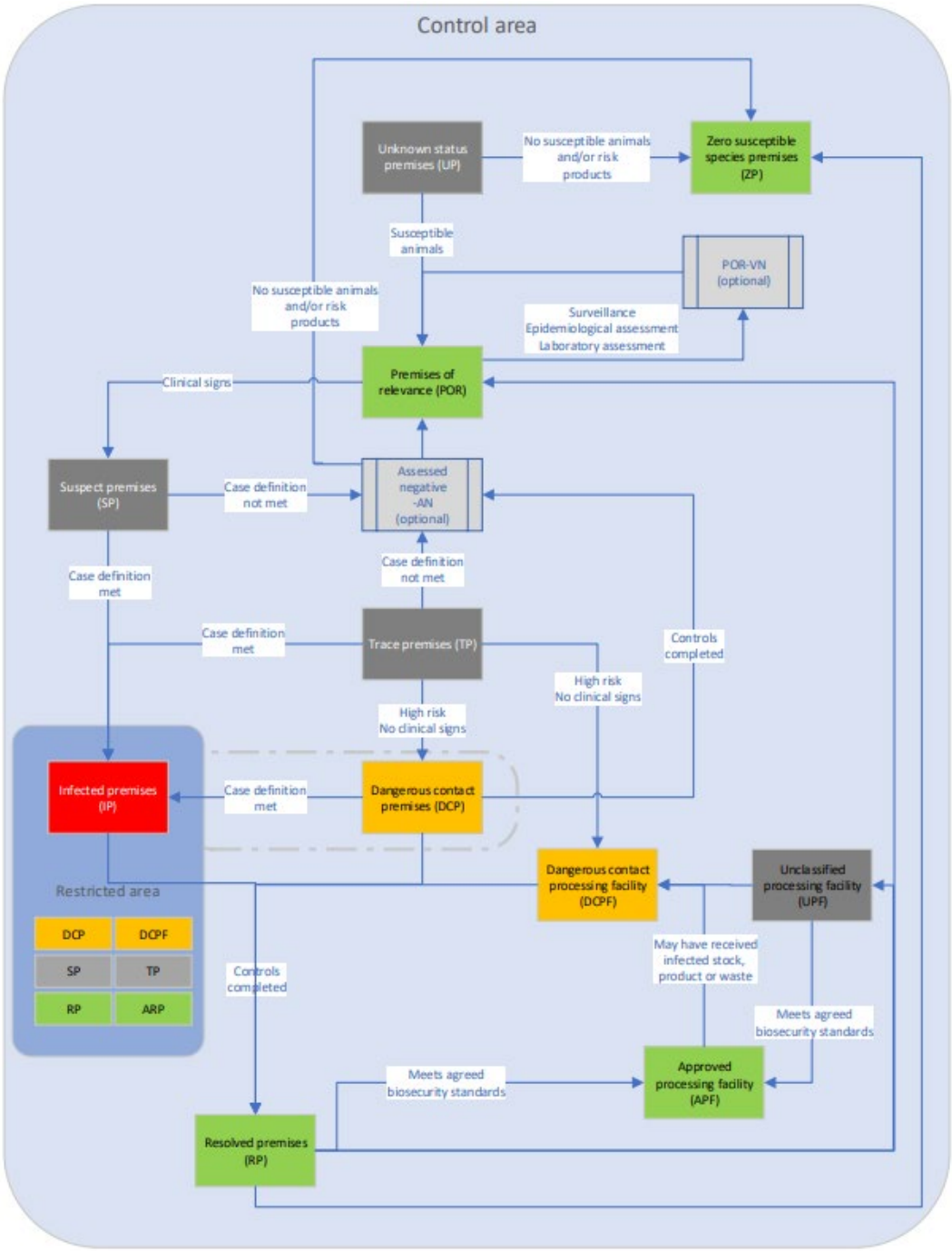


AN = assessed negative; VN = vaccinated

Notes:

1. This flowchart is focused on control measures required for contagious diseases (e.g. equine influenza, foot-and-mouth disease). For diseases that are not in this category (e.g. Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus), procedures for declared areas might not be used at all and/or procedures for premises classification may need to be modified.
2. Arrow with text refers to investigation and risk assessment.
3. The flowchart can start at more than one place.
4. A UP could be reclassified as an ARP, ZP, SP, TP, DCP, DCPF, UPF, IP or APF.

Figure 4.1 Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a restricted area



AN = assessed negative; VN = vaccinated

Notes:

1. This flowchart is focused on control measures required for contagious diseases (e.g. equine influenza, foot-and-mouth disease). For diseases that are not in this category (e.g. Hendra virus, anthrax, Australian bat lyssavirus), procedures for declared areas might not be used at all and/or procedures for premises classification may need to be modified.
2. Arrow with text refers to investigation and risk assessment.
3. When IP or DCP are identified in the control area, the restricted area is extended to include them, and as many SP and TP as is practicable.
4. The flowchart can start at more than one place.
5. A UP could be reclassified as a POR, ZP, SP, TP, DCP, DCPF, UPF, IP or APF.

Figure 4.2 Flowchart for transition of premises classifications in a control area

Glossary

Terms and definitions

Standard AUSVETPLAN terms

For definitions of standard AUSVETPLAN terms, see the **AUSVETPLAN *Glossary***.

Abbreviations

Standard AUSVETPLAN abbreviations

For standard AUSVETPLAN abbreviations, see the **AUSVETPLAN *Glossary***.