**Consultation on proposals to make porcine epidemic diarrhoea a notifiable disease in Scotland**

**Introduction**

1. The purpose of this consultation was to gather views from the pig industry and other interested stakeholders on proposals to introduce legislation to make porcine epidemic diarrhoea (PED) a notifiable disease in Scotland.
2. The consultation paper proposed that suspected or confirmed cases of PED must be notified to the Scottish Pig Disease Control Centre (SPDCC), which is operated by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS). On receipt of a notification SPDCC would investigate, and offer biosecurity advice to the affected keeper as well as nearby keepers at risk of infection.

**The Consultation**

1. The consultation was published online and ran between 13 November and 24 December 2015, inviting comments on the following key issues:

* Whether or not PED should be made a notifiable disease;
* possible risks or alternatives to making PED a notifiable disease; and
* whether making PED a notifiable disease created any privacy issues for a keeper affected by a suspected outbreak.

**Responses**

1. A total of 11 responses were received, as listed at **Annex A.** Four responses came from individuals and seven from organisations.
2. All respondents gave permission for their response to be made public. Published responses are available at the Scottish Government’s consultation website at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/animal-welfare/specified-diseases>.

**Overall findings**

1. Respondents indicated unanimous support for the proposal to make PED a notifiable disease. The Privacy Impact Assessment and Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment documents which accompanied the consultation paper were agreed without amendment. A summary of responses to each question can be found at **Annex B**.

**Next Steps**

1. We would like to thank all respondents for taking the time to reply to this consultation. Following unanimous support for the Scottish Government’s proposals, on 21 January 2016 the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment signed the Specified Diseases (Notification) Amendment (Scotland) Order 2016 and this was laid in the Scottish Parliament on 25 January.
2. Subject to ongoing Parliamentary scrutiny, the Order will come into force on 2nd March and will add PED to the list of notifiable diseases in Scotland. Further information for pig keepers and others affected by the new law will be provided in due course.

Scottish Government

Animal Health and Welfare Division

25 January 2016

**ANNEX A**

**List of Consultation Respondents**

**Individuals**

Mr J Robertson

Mr Kevin Gilbert

Mr Philip Sleigh

*(plus one anonymous response)*

**Organisations**

British Veterinary Association

East Ayrshire Council

GW Pig Consultants Ltd

NFU Scotland

SRUC

Quality Meat Scotland

Wholesome Pigs (Scotland) Ltd

**ANNEX B**

**Summary of questions and analysis of responses**

**1. Do you agree with the proposal to make PED notifiable?**

All 11 respondents agreed with this proposal. Many respondents noted serious concerns about the negative impact PED could have on Scotland’s pig industry should an outbreak occur and spread. Making PED notifiable was seen as a proportionate and effective way of controlling this risk.

The only additional comment came from East Ayrshire Council who noted the need for a contingency plan should the SPDCC reporting system break down. The Scottish Government will work closely with QMS and Wholesome Pigs Scotland (WPS) to ensure that a robust reporting system is in place.

**2. Could reporting suspicion of PED to QMS delay investigations into other pig**

**diseases that should be notifiable to the Animal and Plant Health Agency?**

All 11 respondents indicated that reporting suspicions of PED would not risk delaying investigations into other notifiable diseases. Respondents noted that the clinical signs of PED were very different from other notifiable diseases so there was no room for confusion. Respondents also argued that when pig keepers made their initial call to SPDCC, they could be immediately advised to contact APHA if SPDCC considered that the symptoms may be a notifiable disease other than PED.

One respondent noted a concern that a widespread outbreak could create backlogs for laboratories that delayed the testing of other suspected notifiable diseases. We do not consider this risk to be greater than with any other disease outbreak, and will continue to monitor the situation with APHA as required.

**3. Will the information that must be reported on suspicion or confirmation be**

**sufficient to help QMS support pig keepers?**

All 10 respondents who answered this question agreed that the information reported would be sufficient to allow QMS to take action. One respondent added that access to ScotEID movements of stock off and on the premise would allow identification of risk areas beyond farms in the immediate area.

**4. Do the benefits of informing keepers within the local area about a confirmed PED case outweigh any risks to privacy of the affected keeper being identified?**

All 11 respondents indicated their agreement. Respondents commented that any risk to privacy was offset by the improved monitoring and control of potential PED outbreaks in Scotland.

**5. Does the Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) accurately assess the risk of collecting, storing and sharing mandatory information required by the legislative proposal?**

The 10 respondents who answered this question all agreed that the PIA was accurate.

**6. Does the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) accurately reflect the costs and benefits the proposed legislation will bring?**

The 10 respondents who answered this question all agreed that the BRIA was accurate. WPS, GW Pig Consultants Ltd and the SRUC all noted that although the proposals would carry some costs for the industry these were outweighed by the benefits.

**7. Is there an alternative approach to controlling PED that ought to be considered (eg. measures not detailed in the SSI)?**

Six respondents answered No to this question, adding that possible alternatives such as increased biosecurity or banning pig imports were not desirable or effective. One respondent did not answer this question.

The remaining three respondents (WPS, QMS and SRUC) answered Yes, and argued that additional support from the Animal and Plant Health Association (APHA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) in the case of a PED outbreak would be beneficial. The Scottish Government will continue to discuss outbreak contingency planning with stakeholders to ensure that adequate resources are available.

**8. Are you content that data collected as part of the industry disease response may be used for additional research purposes?**

The 10 respondents who answered this question all agreed that data should be used for research purposes. Two respondents noted that WPS already handle such data effectively. One respondent added that research data must be anonymous.