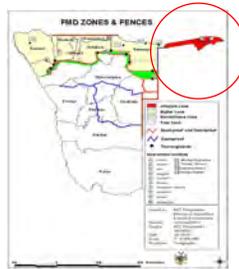




Fundamental requirements for quarantine stations

LESSONS LEARNED FROM PILOT PROJECT IN ZAMBEZI REGION, NAMIBIA

Mary-Louise Penrith & Gavin Thomson



Background

- The Zambezi Region (ZR) of Namibia is regarded as a permanently infected zone for FMD owing to the presence of free-living African buffaloes
- The topography of the region precludes separation of domestic livestock and wildlife with fences
- Access to the floodplains of the Zambezi and Chobe Rivers enables cattle and wild ruminants including buffaloes to survive the dry season



Quarantine stations in ZR

- More than half the cattle in Namibia are raised in the Northern Communal Areas (NCA) north of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (VCF); the ZR falls within the NCA but is the only permanently FMD-infected region
- Stringent regulations are in place to ensure that FMD-infected meat is not moved from the ZR to the FMD-free zone south of the VCF
- These regulations include vaccination, movement control and a prescribed 21-day pre-slaughter quarantine period for cattle destined for the Katima Mulilo abattoir
- This enables meat from the KM abattoir to be moved to the free zone of Namibia or to neighbouring countries where a market exists as long as no outbreak has occurred in the region [NB – with proper management and animal traceability this is an unnecessary precaution]

OIE Definition of a Quarantine Station

QUARANTINE STATION means an establishment under the control of the *Veterinary Authority* where *animals* are maintained in isolation with no direct or indirect contact with other *animals*, to ensure that there is no transmission of specified pathogenic agents outside the establishment while the *animals* are undergoing observation for a specified length of time and, if appropriate, testing or treatment

Basic requirements of QS to comply with the definition

- The QS must be controlled by the Veterinary Authority through regular inspection and monitoring
- The QS must be securely fenced with livestock-proof fencing and with controlled entry, restricted to people authorised by the Veterinary Authority
- The QS must be suitable in terms of available feed and water for animals to be held for the prescribed period, in the case of FMD 30 days according to Article 8.8.22
- The QS must have animal handling facilities that permit inspection, vaccination and if necessary testing by the Veterinary Authority
- Records must be kept of the animals in the QS and made available to the Veterinary Authority to enable monitoring

The ZR Katima Mulilo and Kopano QS

Compliances with OIE definition

- The QS are supervised by the VA
- The QS are fenced
- There is a record of all animals entering the QS
- There are handling facilities for cattle
- The cattle are inspected for any FMD lesions upon entry and can be revaccinated to comply with Article 8.8.22
- Water and grazing/browse are available

Non-compliances

- QS on community land with free access for communities, owners and herders; no visitor records kept
- Grazing is inadequate so:
 - Cattle lose condition and value, or
 - care of cattle and extra feed are provided by owners or herders; no facilities for them to stay so must go in and out often e.g. to buy food
 - Extension to 30 days may not be feasible
- Movement permits indicated that cattle sometimes leave the QS and return home, e.g. cows that calve

Lessons learned from the ZR QS

- Good planning of a QS is essential to ensure that OIE compliance is feasible; in ZR the siting of water points resulted in a wide area of trampling that drastically reduced the available grazing
- Dedicated resident stockmen or non-resident stockmen following a strict biosecurity protocol are needed to care for the cattle in the QS
- If additional fodder is required it must be provided from a reliable source in a way that permits compliance with the OIE definition
- Access should be strictly controlled via a locked and manned gate and records kept of all essential visitors e.g. veterinary inspectors; no non-essential visitors should be admitted
- The presentation of pregnant cows should be strongly discouraged
- If the VA can provide the required supervision but not the labour, private QS could be a viable alternative and could still achieve compliance, as the OIE stipulates 'control' by the VA but not necessarily 'ownership'
- Combined QS/feedlots?

Thank you

