CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS CONCERNING THE ERADICATION OF AN ANIMAL

RABIES
OUTBREAK

Produced on behalf of the Constituent Authorities of Tyne and Wear by the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit
December 2005
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

RABIES

Overview of Disease
The rabies virus causes acute infection of the central nervous system in a wide range of mammals, including humans. Once clinical signs of the disease develop, it is invariably fatal and there is no known cure. However, significant advances in knowledge of the disease means that in the developed world, the spread of the disease is now controllable. Prompt post exposure treatment in humans can improve survival.

Rabies is most commonly transmitted by the bite of an infected animal. Other routes of transmission include contamination of open wounds, scratches or mucous membranes, e.g. eye, nose, mouth, with infected saliva. Rabies virus does not survive long outside the host. However, once infection has occurred the incubation period of the disease is highly variable. Appropriate controls would be applied to terrestrial mammals within the area considered to be infected, and this will depend significantly on the extent and source of the specific outbreak.

The disease in animals is most likely to be introduced either through a smuggled pet or the failure to detect and detain a non-compliant Pet Travel Scheme animal.

European Bat Lyssavirus (EBLV) which has been found in bats in this country is not the same rabies strain as that carried by animals such as cats, dogs and foxes. EBLVs very rarely cross the species barrier from bats to other animals or humans. There have been no recorded cases of rabies in UK wildlife or pet animals since EBLV was first identified in a bat in the UK in 1996.

Further detail is set out in the Disease Control Strategy, the Disease profile and the Department of Health’s Memorandum on Rabies [see www.defra.gov.uk for further information on these].
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF A BITING OR SCRATCHING INCIDENT INVOLVING A SUSPECTED RABID ANIMAL

IMMEDIATE FIRST AID TREATMENT

- Wash immediately with soap or detergent. If these are not available use water alone under a running tap for at least 5 minutes.
- Apply iodine solution or a household antiseptic such as TCP. If available use a tincture of alcohol (40-70%).
- Cover with a simple dressing.
- Do not apply unfamiliar substances to wounds as these could destroy the body’s immune response.

NB
‘Flush soap and water into the wound, clean thoroughly but do not scrub as this is not advisable and may cause further damage to the wound and possibly increase the risk of introduction of the virus to the nervous system.’

‘Where soap has been used to clean wounds, all traces of it should be removed before application of any solutions or antiseptics because soap neutralises the activity of such compounds’.

This advice is based upon the Memorandum on Rabies – Prevention and Control (Department of Health, 2000)
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RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Aim and Scope of the Plan
This Plan has been formulated in response to guidelines laid down by DEFRA and after consultation with Partners. The aim of this plan is to mitigate the effects of an outbreak of rabies within Tyne and Wear impacting on the general public. The Plan will also provide guidance on the disease itself and the necessary procedures and arrangements to be followed in order to deal with such an outbreak.

Objectives
- To provide a framework for a co-ordinated response to an incident threatening, or directly affecting Tyne and Wear, by putting in place arrangements for the alerting of all relevant organisations, introducing appropriate measures to confirm the threat, contain the emergency or limit its spread, and to provide information to members of the public;
- To identify organisations involved including key personnel and responsibilities, and establish liaison arrangements between them;
- Establish communications links and standby methods;
- Identify equipment needs, including animal control and quarantine requirements;
- To provide information on the nature of the rabies disease including the contacts and arrangements for obtaining further advice and assistance;
- To put in place arrangements for dealing with the press, media and questions from the public in the case of a rabies emergency;
- To consider longer term issues regarding clean-up and ensuring that areas are sterile for a return to normality.

Maintenance of the Plan
This plan will be fully reviewed every two years. Amendments or changes in the intervening period should be circulated between Partners as and when they occur.

General Information
The main legal instrument in the fight against rabies in this country is the Rabies (Control) Order 1974 and associated legislation, namely:-
- The Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and other Mammals) Order 1974, as amended by the Rabies (Control) Order 1974;
- The Rabies (Compensation) Order 1976;
- Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Amendment Regulations 1976;
- The Rabies Virus Order 1979;
- The Specified Animal Pathogens Order 1998;
- The Pet Travel Scheme.
(For further details on individual legislation see Appendix B)
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

The Animal Health Act 1981

This Act is the principal Act under which local authorities are required to take action in relation to diseases of animals. It provides powers to make Orders concerning the declaration of Infected Areas and the destruction of foxes and such other wild mammals as may be prescribed. It also provides the Police with powers of arrest for offences relating to the prevention and control of rabies.

General Responsibilities

Overall control of a suspected or confirmed rabies emergency lies with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

In the absence of evidence of rabies in Tyne and Wear, discovery or suspicion of rabies in adjacent Counties and Regions may be sufficient to generate public alarm in Tyne and Wear. Elements of this Plan may therefore be used as the basis for a response to widespread public alarm in Tyne and Wear, or to integrate into a joint response with neighbouring Counties/Regions.

This plan contains the basis of the emergency response to any outbreak of rabies and should be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations, and contingency plans of the agencies which would respond to a rabies emergency and has been prepared and agreed by those agencies involved.

The plan is, in the main, prepared in general terms as many variable factors will influence the precise operation of the plan when an outbreak is declared and the advice and actions of the DEFRA Veterinary Officers will determine when and how the plan, or sections of it, will operate.

The local authority response to a rabies emergency will be led by Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (as lead authority for a rabies emergency) as responsibility for rabies control now rests with the five separate local authorities of Tyne and Wear. The responsibility for the prevention, control and eradication of rabies within each local authority will be undertaken by their respective Animal Health Inspectors.

Each Local Authority has appointed a Rabies Contingency Control Officer responsible for the implementation and control of the operation in their district who will normally be the Head of the Environmental Health Department or equivalent function for that district.
1.1 DEFRA RESPONSE

DEFRA’s response to a suspected or confirmed case of rabies is detailed in their Rabies Contingency Plan which at the time of writing is still at draft stage. This plan is based on DEFRA’s National Framework Foot and Mouth Disease Contingency Plan which provides the detailed framework for the response to an exotic animal disease outbreak and complements the State Veterinary Service Operational Instructions (VIPER (Veterinary Instructions, Procedures and Emergency Routines) Chapter 9B) and local Animal Health Divisional Office contingency plans.

The response to an outbreak will be controlled using the principles of Strategic, Tactical and Operational command structure proportionate to the nature of the outbreak.

A standard alert system has been adopted by DEFRA as a basis for planning the response to a disease outbreak. Alert states of ‘Amber’ (in the case of suspicion of disease) and ‘Red’ (on confirmation of the first case of disease) will be called.

Further information regarding DEFRA’s contingency arrangements for dealing with a rabies outbreak can be accessed through their website: www.defra.gov.uk

The diagram on page 2-2 under Section Two shows DEFRA’s command structure for dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of rabies.
1.2 SCHEMATIC OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE STAGES TO A RABIES OUTBREAK

FIRST NOTIFICATION
(TS investigate + Police + DEFRA)

DECLARE AN INFECTED PLACE
(DEFRA Inspector or TS)

DECLARE AN INFECTED AREA
(DEFRA Only)

ESTABLISH CONTROL CENTRE(S)
(TS/DEFRA or Police – may be same location)

SIGNPOST & CONTROL INFECTED AREA
(TS with Police/[Council] Highways Assistance)

CATCH ANY STRAY ANIMALS
(TS with other Council Dept Assistance)

OPERATE ANIMAL HOLDING PREMISES
(TS with other Council Dept Assistance)

RETURN/DISPOSAL OF ANIMALS
(TS/DEFRA with other Council Dept Assistance)

INVESTIGATE OFFENCES
(TS)

DECLARE OUTBREAK CONTAINED
(DEFRA/TS/Environment Agency)

**TS:** Local Authority Trading Standards (Animal Health Inspectors)

**DEFRA:** Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
1.3 SCHEMATIC OF THE T&W EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT RESPONSE TO A RABIES OUTBREAK

SOURCE OF INFORMATION TO EPU DUTY OFFICER

START LOG

Confirm situation with DEFRA, Local Authorities AND Police
Do Infected Place or Infected Area Rules apply?
Where was last sighting?

ESTABLISH CO-ORDINATION CENTRE
Advise all Parties

ALERT
DISTRICT COUNCIL AFFECTED

ALERT
Adjacent Local Authorities
including
Durham and Northumberland

Contact Gateshead Council
for access to RABIES Trailer, etc., by affected Authority

Contact Environment Agency
for disposal of any carcasses

Contact Appropriate Voluntary Agencies to provide welfare facilities
for those staff engaged in the field

Monitor Situation
Liaise with all Parties
MAINTAIN LOG
until Outbreak declared as contained

NB: Incidents of this nature may not be classified as a Major Incident but could be prolonged.
1.4 INITIAL NOTIFICATION
The Rabies (Control) Order 1974 places a duty on any person who suspects rabies in an animal to report that suspicion to an inspector (DEFRA or Local Authority) or a police officer. Therefore the first intimation of a suspected case of rabies is likely to come from a veterinary surgeon or a member of the public reporting a suspect animal to either a Police Officer; an officer of the Local Authority; DEFRA; or in some cases, the RSPCA.

In the first instance notification may relate to a suspected unlawful landing of an animal and there may be no suggestion that rabies is involved. However, any such cases must be treated as if rabies is suspected.

Where suspicion is reported to the local authority or police, information must be passed immediately to the local Animal Health Divisional Office (see below).

1.5 LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTION FOLLOWING NOTIFICATION
Upon notification to a local authority the Environmental Health and Trading Standards on-duty officer (or equivalent) must be informed of the situation in order that agreed procedures can take place.

The on-duty officer will require information on:-

- The type of animal involved;
- Its location;
- Any information as to where it may have been;
- Any information as to human or other animal contact with the suspect animal;
- Details of the owner/keeper.

This information must be passed immediately by the on-duty officer to:-

- a) Animal Health Divisional Office, The Quadrant, The Waterfront, Kingfisher Boulevard, Newburn Riverside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 8NZ
  Tel: (0191) 229 5400
  Fax: (0191) 229 5413;

- b) The Police if not already aware;

- c) The Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning Unit.

1.5.1 Access to Rabies Equipment & Trailer
Gateshead MBC is designated as the 'lead' local authority for a suspected or confirmed case of rabies and accordingly has access to the necessary equipment, etc. to detain an animal on behalf of DEFRA.

Gateshead MBC have their own internal arrangements for activation of this resource should a suspect animal be reported within their local authority jurisdiction.

For activation by other local authorities in Tyne and Wear the affected authority should, after following the procedures listed above under 1.5:-

- a) Inform Gateshead MBC via ETIS on (0191) 477 0844 (24hr) of the details of the incident and your contact details;
b) Liaise with the Gateshead MBC on-duty officer to arrange to meet with them at the Metrology Laboratory, Saltmeadows Road, Gateshead in order to access the rabies equipment and trailer.

Further details on the rabies equipment available can be found in Appendix D.

1.5.2 DEFRA Veterinary Inspector

Pending arrival of the Veterinary Inspector (VI), the owner or person in charge of the animal should be advised by the local authority Animal Health Officer to:

i. Place the animal in secure accommodation and advise other people to stay away from it;

ii. Ensure that any person who has been in contact with the animal washes their hands;

iii. If the person was bitten they must immediately wash the bitten area under running water using soap and then contact their GP for advice.

Where a person has, or may have been bitten, the VI will inform the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC).

1.6 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

On arrival the VI will place the premises under restrictions. The VI will examine the animal and collate a history of the animal for at least the previous 15 days and a level of suspicion assigned to the case. Depending on the level of suspicion the following actions may be taken:

- Rabies is not suspected – the restrictions on the premises are lifted;
- If history and clinical signs are suggestive of rabies but there has been no human exposure incident – the animal is detained in secure accommodation for at least 14 days for observation;
- If clinical signs consistent with rabies are evident and/or there is a link to a previous confirmed case – euthanase the suspect and trace contacts with other mammals, including humans.

Restrictions may also be applied to animals that have been in contact with the suspect or confirmed rabid animal:

- Until negative results are obtained for the suspect animal or for 6 months following last contact where rabies is confirmed;
- Where disease is confirmed and the contact animal is a carnivore and there is a history of a biting incident with the suspect animal, compulsory euthanasia may be carried out and a Notice served on the owner of the animal.

1.7 DECLARATION OF AN INFECTED PLACE

The VI will serve notice under Schedule II of the Rabies (Control) Order 1974 on all premises where the suspect animal has been or is suspected to have resided within the previous 56 days. This will also apply to an animal which has been or which may have been exposed to the infection of rabies through contact with an affected or suspected animal.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

The notice will remain in force until either:-

- Appropriate cleansing and disinfection is carried out following the removal of the animal; or
- Suspicion of disease is ruled out following observation of the suspect animal.

1.8 DECLARATION OF AN INFECTED AREA

Where epidemiology suggests that disease has not been contained, an Infected Area may be declared and appropriate control measures will be introduced. These may include:-

- Tracing exposed domestic animals and either placing them in secure accommodation or euthanasing them if the risk of transmission is high and they are species likely to transmit disease onwards, eg. Domestic carnivores;
- Prevention of exposure which could lead to wildlife involvement either directly or through contacts with stray animals;
- Restrictions of animal movements into and out of the area;
- Seizure, detention and, if necessary, destruction of animals not under proper control;
- Compulsory vaccination of animals;
- Prohibition of gathering of animals and sporting and recreational activities;
- Destruction of foxes and other susceptible wild animals.

To deter owners from abandoning their animals, each local authority will offer a free destruction service to persons wishing to dispose of pets rather than risk infection. Veterinary surgeons in private practice as members of the British Veterinary Association have offered their assistance in operating such a scheme.

1.9 VACCINATION

Vaccination of domestic animals is only likely to be considered within an Infected Area where there is a risk of the outbreak spreading to wildlife or where the contacts of a rabid animal cannot be established.

For domestic animals, vaccination will be carried out under the supervision of the State Veterinary Service at the owner’s expense.

Where it is confirmed that rabies is present in foxes, it is likely that the most effective and safest way of eliminating the disease in foxes will be through the use of an oral vaccination strategy.

It is unlikely that the use of vaccination as a control method would begin until at least 5 days after the first confirmed case.
1.10 ILLEGAL LANDINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

The Rabies (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Other Mammals) Order 1974 prohibits the landing of mammals into Great Britain, except under licence.

The Marine Unit of Northumbria Police have powers to board any vessel coming into seaports in Tyne and Wear for immigration purposes and to verify the carrying of any animals.

Any notification for police involvement outside normal operating hours for the Unit will be dealt with by a Police Constable who will exercise the same powers of boarding and verification.

It is anticipated that a report of an animal, either on board a vessel or on the dockside, will most probably be made to the Police in the first instance in which case the Police Officer will act to check on the situation and secure the animal if necessary.

**NB:** Police Officers have limited personal protective equipment for such purposes.

If a suspected animal is subsequently held, the Police will notify the Animal Health Divisional Office and await their arrival on the scene before further action is taken. The Police will also notify the appropriate local authority Animal Health Officer.

If necessary an Animal Health Officer from the affected local authority will liaise with the Police and the VI to arrange the detainment of the animal pending veterinary investigations and consignment to approved quarantine premises.

1.10.1 Dealing with an Illegal Landing

There are three options open to the VI once the suspect animal has been detained:

- Assign the suspected animal to approved quarantine premises at the owner’s expense;
- Order the immediate exportation of the animal where the animal has not actually landed, e.g. is running loose on board ship, or detained by Customs at the dockside; or
- Order the destruction of the animal.

This last option is only likely to be carried out where the animal is unable to be caught, isolated and detained, or where the owner requests it because the quarantine costs are too high for them to meet.

1.11 QUARANTINE

All animals imported into Great Britain legally under a licence must be moved immediately on landing to an authorised quarantine premise and remain there for six months.

Any ‘illegally’ imported/landed animal may be temporarily quarantined until a decision is made by those agencies with the necessary authority as to whether the animal is further quarantined, re-exported or destroyed.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

All existing quarantine premises must meet stringent requirements. Such premises are regularly inspected by VI's to ensure that satisfactory security and welfare standards are maintained.

The nearest authorised quarantine premises are at Thornley Bank Boarding Kennels in Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear.

The transportation of an animal to quarantine premises will be undertaken by DEFRA or Gateshead MBC.

1.12 LOCAL AUTHORITY ANIMAL DETENTION POUNDS

Suspected animals may be taken initially to a local authority animal detention pound for isolation pending possible transfer to approved quarantine premises.

It is essential that all animals committed to pounds are detained in secure conditions and that all measures are taken to prevent direct contact with other animals therein. An Animal Seizure Form (See Appendix C) for the identification/registration of the animal must be completed. Each suspected animal will be photographed and given a unique reference number.

The welfare of animals seized and detained under rabies control orders must receive all proper attention. All Pound staff should be aware of the need to monitor the health of the animal and to report unusual occurrences to a Veterinary Surgeon. The death of any detained animal must be reported to the Divisional Veterinary Manager of DEFRA.

A suspected animal may only be released or transferred from a pound with the permission of the Divisional Veterinary Manager.
2.1 DEFRA STRATEGIC LEVEL
An outbreak of rabies is considered to relate to a case of classical rabies virus or any other rabies viruses in a terrestrial mammal likely to transmit onwards, confirmed on laboratory test or on the basis of clinical confirmation when linked to another confirmed case.

Strategic level will provide high level command and control at all stages of an animal disease outbreak and will aid a cross governmental response in which the DEFRA Management Board would initially take command. The Civil Contingencies Committee (CCC) would quickly be established to support DEFRA’s response.

2.2 DEFRA TACTICAL LEVEL
Tactical level will provide DEFRA with a co-ordinated response to direction from the Strategic Group, operational feedback and enable an operational strategy to be developed and implemented.

The Emergency Direction Group (EDG) will take responsibility at this level and will act as the conduit for direction from strategic command into the National Disease Control Centre (NDCC).

2.3 DEFRA OPERATIONAL LEVEL
The Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) under control of the Divisional Veterinary Manager will assume responsibility for liaison with operational partners.

Action will depend on the circumstances of a particular outbreak and on scientific and veterinary advice. DEFRA’s Disease Control Strategy will be followed in deciding what action to take (see the DEFRA website: www.defra.gov.uk for further information).

The following diagram shows DEFRA’s command structure for disease control:
2.4 DEFRA SINGLE-LINE COMMAND STRUCTURE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS
2.5 LOCAL AUTHORITY OPERATIONAL CONTROL
TO BE CONFIRMED

2.6 MILITARY AID TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES (MACA)

When *Amber Alert* is triggered, DEFRA will contact the MOD Home and Special Forces Secretariat to notify them of the suspect case. If a case of rabies is confirmed, DEFRA will again contact the MOD to inform them of the outbreak.

If aid is required from the Armed Forces then this would be provided under the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) arrangements, subject to other Armed Forces commitments at the time.
SECTION THREE – Roles & Responsibilities

3.1 INTRODUCTION
The execution of the Government’s policy demands the concerted effort of many Government Departments as well as local authorities, port health authorities and the Police. In Great Britain the central responsibility for the campaign against rabies in animals of all kinds rests with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and their counterparts in Scotland and Wales, although if there were an outbreak on the UK mainland, operational control would rest entirely with the first named.

3.2 GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES
The Government also keep in close contact with the appropriate authorities in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man to ensure compatibility of legislation and regulations and co-ordinate defences with the collective aim of keeping rabies out of the British Isles.

3.2.1 Government Departments
HM Customs & Excise:
> enforcement of import controls at seaports and airports.

Department of Health under Health Protection Agency(s):
> rabies in humans, prophylactic and post-exposure vaccinations.

Environment Agency:
> nature conservation.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister:
> local authorities.

Home Office:
> police implications; penalties.

The devolved administrations for Scotland and Wales:
> the special interests of Scotland and Wales.

3.3 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES
3.3.1 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
The responsibilities of DEFRA in respect of a declared outbreak of rabies are:

a) Arrange for the veterinary investigation of any animal suspected of being rabid.

b) Serve notice of Infected Place on the occupier of such place, and to arrange for the erection of warning signs by the occupier.
c) Remove and dispose of any infected animal or infected carcass.
d) Arrange for the disinfection of Infected Place (by occupier).
e) Serve notice of the lifting of restrictions on an Infected Place on the occupier.
f) Declare any area to be an Infected Area and to apply such of the requirements as are provided for in the Rabies (Control) Order in respect of the whole area or such zones of that area as may be determined.
g) Co-ordinate all action under the legislation including the release of information to the press and public.
h) Arrange for the control and where necessary, the destruction of wild life within the Infected Area.
i) Arrange for any compulsory vaccination programme of domestic animals that may be deemed necessary.
j) In co-operation with the Council(s) and the police arrange for the preparation of and release of press information.

3.3.2 Divisional Veterinary Manager of DEFRA
The Divisional Veterinary Manager, or nominated Deputy, will co-ordinate all action under the legislation, and will:-

a) Arrange for the veterinary investigation of any animal suspected to be rabid.
b) Serve a ‘Notice of Infected Place’, under the Rabies (Control) Order 1974, on the occupier of such a place and arrange for the erection of warning signs by the occupier.
c) Notify suspect cases to the particular local authority Environmental Department or equivalent, and Northumbria Police.
d) Investigate and confirm suspect cases or stand-down the response to a false alarm.
e) Arrange for the removal and disposing of any infected animal or infected carcass.
f) Trace contacts associated with suspect or confirmed cases.
g) Arrange for the disinfection of the Infected Place by the occupier.
h) Declare any area to be an ‘Infected Area’ and apply such of the requirements as are provided for in the Rabies (Control) Order 1974 in respect of the whole area or such zones of the area as may be determined.
i) Arrange for the destruction and disposal of suspect or confirmed cases associated with infected farm animals.
j) Arrange for the control and, where necessary, the destruction of wildlife within the Infected Area.
k) Arrange for any compulsory vaccination programme of domestic animals that may be deemed necessary.
l) Arrange for the prohibition of sporting and recreational activities within any Infected Area.
m) Attend or provide a Liaison Officer at the local authority Rabies Co-ordination Centre.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

n) Provide information to the public for their protection in respect of a Rabies Emergency and to explain control measures.
o) Notify any suspect or confirmed human case(s) to the relevant Director of Public Health or equivalent.
p) Deal with enquiries from the media in accordance with the policy and arrangements contained in Section 5 of this plan.
q) When appropriate, serve notice on the occupier(s) of the lifting of Infected Place restrictions.
r) In consultation with the particular local authority Environmental Health Department or equivalent, determine and confirm the stand-down arrangements.

3.4 NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

Northumbria Police will liaise with the DEFRA Divisional Veterinary Manager and Gateshead MBC as lead local authority for a rabies emergency and will provide a liaison officer at the local authority Rabies Co-ordination Centre if required.

Northumbria Police may also:-

- Act as temporary Animal Health Inspectors for the purpose of enforcing the Animal Health Act 1981 in the Northumbria Police force area. They will normally exercise their powers only in emergencies when DEFRA or the local authority require urgent assistance.
- In the event of a police officer becoming aware of or suspecting that an animal is affected with rabies, the officer must take the following immediate action:-
  a) Ensure that the suspected animal or carcass is isolated. If the animal is a stray, it should be kept under observation, members of the public warned, assistance called upon and action carried out in accordance with paragraphs b) c) and d) below.
  b) Exercise the powers of a Constable under Section 60(V) of the Animal Health Act 1981, to stop and detain persons, vehicles and/or animals.
  c) Notify the DEFRA Divisional Veterinary Manager.
  d) Notify the council(s) Animal Health Inspectors of Tyne & Wear and/or Northumberland specific to the area affected of the suspect animal.
- Police personnel may be called upon to assist with the search for and isolation of stray animals suspected of being infected. Police armed response officers may be called upon to destroy animals which are too dangerous to seize. Armed officers will receive advice from DEFRA where for instance in shooting a suspect rabid animal, damage to the head and neck should be avoided if possible, in case laboratory tests are required.
- Police Marine Section may also be called upon in order to give advice/assistance if there are animals suspected of being infected aboard vessels.
- Help may be given in notifying the public and landowners of fox destruction areas.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

- Police officers will not handle any suspect rabid animal or stray animal in a Rabies Infected Area. Such handling will be carried out by the staff of the local authority or DEFRA.
- Police officers may be called upon to assist in enforcement of animal movements and detention restrictions. This may involve the issue of licences for movements or the isolation and detention of animals moved without authority.
- Posters warning of dangers of rabies will be displayed at Police Stations on request, and will make authorised information packages available to members of the public calling in person to any Police Station within, or within the vicinity of, an Infected Area.

3.5 LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Each local authority involved in this plan is to nominate its own team of officers and arrangements should be made for 24 hours per day operation in the event of an outbreak emergency.

Teams should consist of the following:-

3.5.1 Rabies Contingency Control Officer (RCCO)

a) On receipt of information from DEFRA regarding the declaration of an Infected Area assume overall control and operation of the Rabies Contingency Plan. Accept responsibility for executing the local authorities’ statutory obligations relating to rabies and other animal health and welfare matters.

b) On being informed by DEFRA of its policy, assess how the local authority will implement that policy and request, through nominated officers, the activation of the various Council Directorates to respond under this Plan. Nominate staff to specific tasks.

c) Establish a Forward Control Centre (FCC) and appoint a senior Animal Health Inspector to manage it. The FCC Manager should arrange for sufficient operational and administrative staff to assist and liaise with the RCCO as appropriate.

d) Establish a Main Control Centre (MCC) at the designated location. Appoint a senior Trading Standards Officer to manage it.

e) Ensure that Animal Health Inspectors and other Trading Standards staff implement DEFRA policy on control and containment either within the Infected Area or in support at either the FCC or MCC as deemed appropriate.

f) Liaise closely with DEFRA, the Police and other organisations involved in the response to provide a co-ordinated response to the outbreak.

g) Direct that Officers in the field also liaise closely with the operational officers of DEFRA, the local Police and any members of the public wishing to take part in operations on a voluntary basis.

h) Ensure appropriate levels of staff are employed, using mutual aid agreements with adjacent authorities and neighbouring County authorities as appropriate.

i) Disseminate information between partners extracted from situation reports.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

j) In conjunction with the Council’s Press Officer (Publicity Officer) co-ordinate all press, public relations and information disseminated to the public about the Council’s activities.

k) Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to access Council contingency funding necessary to implement the Council’s statutory duty as described in this plan. Ensure that expenditure is properly monitored and that a satisfactory audit trail is maintained.

3.5.2 Control Centre Operations Officer

a) Setting up control centre in co-operation with DEFRA.
b) Under direct instructions of Rabies Contingency Control Officer, undertake necessary duties to execute Plan.
c) Management of Field Staff operating under the emergency plan.
d) Allocation of duties to members of departmental staff.
e) Setting up and operation of animal pounds.
f) Assemble necessary support staff e.g. Telephonists, Clerks etc., loggers, and general administrative duties.

3.5.3 Liaison Officers

a) Liaise with DEFRA on behalf of Rabies Contingency control Officer.
b) Liaise with Police, Health Authorities, District Councils etc.
c) Maintain liaison between Rabies Contingency Control Officer and field staff.
d) Liaise between Control Centre Operations Officer and animal pounds.

3.5.4. Managers of Animal Pounds

a) Control of and documentation of all animals brought to the pound.
b) Arranging attendance of veterinary officer for humane destruction of animals when required.
c) Liaise with Control Centre Operators and waste collection/disposal function (in conjunction with Environment Agency) for disposal of carcases, etc.

3.5.5. Special Responsibilities Officers

a) Provide Rabies Contingency Control Officer with up to date situation reports.
b) Identify, isolate and contain any suspect animals.
c) Lead teams of Collecting Officers.
d) Liaise with DEFRA Veterinary Officers and arrange for services, when required, of veterinary surgeons in private practice.
e) Organise most effective use of available equipment.
f) Advise and assist any officers engaged on rabies control tasks.
g) Investigate any contravention of legislation and prepare reports for submission to Rabies Contingency Control Officer.

3.5.6. Transportation Officers

a) To assemble nominated Council vehicles and any vehicles on hire and ensure that they are kept in good order.
b) Arrange for additional petrol supplies, etc., with Council Purchasing Officer.

c) Make transport available to Collection and Safety Officers.

3.5.7. **Sign Posting Officers**

To distribute and display such warning signs and posters as directed by Rabies Contingency Control Officer.

3.5.8. **Collection and Safety Officers**

a) Containment of animals suspected of having been illegally landed and of suspected contact animals.

b) Collection and transportation of stray animals to emergency pounds.

3.5.9. **Pound Clerical Officer**

a) Provide clerical assistance in maintaining records of animals impounded, released or destroyed.

b) Collect any charges levied for feeding and watering of animals returned to owners.

c) Maintain radio or telephone contact between Rabies Contingency Control Officer and Pound Manager.

3.5.10. **Publicity Officer**

The Council Press Officer, or equivalent, normally undertakes this role, and would:

a. Manage and coordinate the council’s response to the local, national and international media demands.

b. Liaise with the Rabies Contingency Control Officer, Emergency Service officers and DEFRA to confirm the council’s key messages and planned media activity.

c. Prepare all council news releases and distribute all statements and news releases to the public, media and other relevant groups.

d. Brief council spokesperson(s) and arrange for Council attendance at any multi-agency press conferences

e. Coordinate all interview opportunities

f. Monitor all media coverage.

g. Regularly update all councillors and relevant senior officers about media interest and key messages.

**Animal Health Inspectors**

Animal Health Inspectors will attend to such matters as the isolation and detention of suspect animals, the taking of potential defendants' witnesses’ statements and the detailed investigation work necessary.

Any Animal Health Inspector who becomes aware or suspects that an animal is affected with rabies must take the following urgent action:

a. Ensure the suspected animal/carcase is isolated.

b. Notify the DEFRA Divisional Veterinary Manager.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

c. Notify the Senior Animal Health Inspector, who will make arrangements to implement the Rabies Contingency Plan.
d. In agreement with the Senior Animal Health Inspector notify the police.
e. Serve an Infected Place notice on the occupier of the premises where the animal was present and on occupiers of premises where other animals may have been exposed to infection by contact.
f. Liaise with the Senior Animal Health Inspector to identify a suitable Forward Control Centre near the Infected Area and assist in setting this up.
g. Issue notices on animal owners as appropriate (see Annex B).
h. Liaise with DEFRA and Police at the Infected Area and assist in implementing DEFRA policy on containment.
i. With other staff (District Council Animal Officers and/or Dog Wardens) assist in collection of stray animals and transportation to detention pounds.
j. Serve notices as required for the confinement of cats, dogs and other animals.

Other internal departmental Staff
These consist mainly of Environmental Health Officers, Technical Assistants, Dog Wardens, Technicians, Pest Control Officers, Trainees, Trading Standards Officers, Advice Officers and Clerical staff. According to the severity of the incident, these staff members will be drawn into operations by stages. Duties here will consist mainly of:
(i) maintaining observation on suspect animals until the same have been safely isolated and detained; and
(ii) making enquiries, possibly extending over a wide area, involving door-to-door interviews with the public to discover people or animals at risk who may have come into contact with suspect animals.

Legal Services
The Legal Services function of each local authority will need to provide adequate staff to deal with the presentation of cases in local courts.

Council Direct Labour Organisations
At the request of the RCCO, the DLO Manager will:
a. Nominate an officer to liaise with the RCCO at the MCC.
b. Assist in the erection of signs marking the boundaries of infected areas, and around land where the destruction of wildlife is being carried out.
c. Source additional transport for the movement of animals and equipment.
d. Assist in the disposal of animal carcasses and waste products.
e. Provide facilities for the production of maps.
f. Assist in arranging for the construction of penning, fencing, etc.
g. Assist as required in setting up animal pounds at premises identified and leased by the Council Estates & Property Service.
h. Arrange for the cleansing and disinfection of premises and any vehicles leased to the Council in respect of the Rabies outbreak.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Council Estates or Property function
At the request of the RCCO the Head of this service, or other Resource provider, will:

a) Assist in the **identification** and **provision** of suitable premises on a short term basis for use as animal pounds.

b) Negotiate arrangements with property owners for the use of such premises, including the payment of a financial consideration to cover their costs.

c) May provide a list of pre-identified premises subject to availability.

Council Finance Officer
At the request of the RCCO the Head of this service will:

a. Authorise appropriate arrangements for contingency spending necessary to implement the Councils’ statutory duties as described in this plan.

b. Properly monitor all contingency expenditure.

c. Maintain a satisfactory audit trail.

d. Provide financial reports to the RCCO as required.

e. Prepare and submit appropriate accounts to Central Government for reimbursement of costs as directed.

3.6 HEALTH PROTECTION AGENCY
In the event of a declared outbreak of Rabies, the Health Protection Agency, on behalf of the Primary Care Trusts will:-

a) Nominate an officer to liaise with the Rabies Contingency Control Officer.

b) Provide and where appropriate, arrange administration of prophylactic treatment to those operating, in support of the Rabies Contingency Plan, and therefore significantly at risk through their involvement. This will include those immediate front-line staff (animal handlers).

c) Advise the Rabies Co-ordinating Group as appropriate on specific human health matters related to rabies and control in the event of an outbreak.

3.7 FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY
The Food Standards Agency, together with the Environment Agency, have statutory duties for measures to counteract environmental pollution, which is likely to threaten the safety of food in the production chain. They will if necessary analyse samples of foodstuffs from land and water which may be polluted, to determine whether action is necessary under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985.

Their joint response would be:-

a) To provide a Liaison Officer to work with the local authority Rabies Co-ordination Centre.

b) To provide information to the public for their protection in respect of contamination likely to affect the safety of food.

c) To manage enquiries from the media in accordance with their defined policy and arrangements concerning affects on food.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

3.8 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The Environment Agency has statutory duties for measures to counteract environmental pollution. They will, if necessary, analyse samples of land and water which may be polluted.

The main aim of the Environment Agency is to determine the location for safe disposal of animal carcasses destroyed in the outbreak and that such disposal would not contaminate potable water supplies.

3.9 TYNE & WEAR EMERGENCY PLANNING UNIT

TWEPU will:-

a) Provide the Pennine House premises as an emergency communications centre where any rabies incident covers several districts.

b) If required, establish and arrange for members of the Emergency Planning Unit to staff the Rabies Co-ordination Centre.

c) Act as a focal point for local authority assistance.

d) Monitor the course of the emergency and, if necessary, offer assistance and/or advice.

e) If necessary, act as a link to seek assistance from voluntary agencies appropriate to the emergency and facilitate extra operational communications, as may be required (eg RAYNET).
4.1 INTRODUCTION

If a rabies outbreak were to be declared, urgent public warning information will need to be issued to advise members of the public of any possible risk to their safety and what action, if any, needs to be taken.

DEFRA will endeavour to make the earliest possible announcement of information on the outbreak, consistent with the essential alert of interested external stakeholders. These external stakeholders are:-

- Individuals affected;
- Regional/local health trusts;
- Local authorities concerned;
- Local police;
- National Farmers Union;
- Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons;
- British Small Animal Veterinary Association;
- British Veterinary Association.

4.2 PUBLIC WARNING MESSAGES.

All messages will be issued in consultation with other appropriate agencies although in urgent circumstances, the Police may issue these in isolation. In this instance the Police may use touring loudhailer announcements and personal visits to households to warn the public of the risk.

DEFRA has stocks of publicity material for distribution in localities; to pet owners, and to every householder in the infected area. Local authorities and Police will be supplied with DEFRA Rabies posters for display at Police Stations and on public notice boards.

4.3 HELPLINES

DEFRA have a general Helpline 08459 335577 to deal with public interest.

4.4 NORTH EAST INFORMATION LINE (NEIL)

The North East Information Line (NEIL) provides members of the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF) a means of warning and informing the public and the media about critical or major incidents and would be a useful information source during a rabies outbreak in Tyne and Wear or Northumberland.
RABIES CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Information can be placed on NEIL by the police and/or members of the LRF through established activation arrangements.

For members of the public and media the telephone number of NEIL is:

08456 004 004

4.5 DEFRA WEBSITE

DEFRA’s website is a key source of information in the event of an outbreak or threat of disease. The site will include:-

- A list of premises where disease is confirmed will be published as necessary. This will not include premises of contact animals or premises where animals have been euthanased on suspicion of disease for data protection reasons;
- Full details of Infected Areas including interactive maps;
- Full details of disease control measures and restrictions;
- Updated information on vaccination;
- Advice to animal owners, farmers, local authorities, and other rural stakeholders;
- Advice on activities in the Infected Area;
- Links to other relevant websites.

4.6 MEDIA

News releases, media briefings and co-ordination of official interviews with the media will be organised by DEFRA Press Office working alongside Government News Network; Department of Health; Health Protection Agency; Local Authority and Police and in conjunction with No10 and the News Co-ordination Centre of the Civil Contingencies Secretariat.