

Animal Health Act 1981: Expenditure and Prosecutions – 2023

Return of expenditure incurred and prosecutions taken under the Animal Health Act 1981, and incidences of Notifiable Disease in imported animals for the year 2023

SG/2024/17

April 2024

Annual return made under section 80 of the Animal Health Act 1981

This statutory return is required to be made and laid before Parliament in accordance with Section 80 of the Animal Health Act 1981, and includes data relating to Scotland only.

A separate report has been compiled by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Welsh Government for their respective functions.

This return is compiled from information supplied to the Scottish Government and while every effort is made to ensure its accuracy, this cannot be guaranteed.

The Scottish Government
Agriculture and Rural Economy Directorate
March 2024

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Prosecutions under the Animal Health Act 1981 in 2023

There were no prosecutions in 2023.

Compensation paid for animals slaughtered to prevent the spread of animal diseases in 2023

Type of Disease	Amount (see note 1)
Bovine Tuberculosis	£1,430,017
Less receipts from salvage of carcasses	£253,957
Total Net Compensation Paid	£1,176,060
Avian influenza	£5,112,677 (see note 2)
Total Net Compensation Paid for All Diseases	£6,288,737

Notes:

1. All figures have been rounded up to the nearest pound.
2. This figure includes £1,097,269 compensation paid for outbreaks that occurred in 2022, but had not been finalised prior to the report for 2022, and also £805 compensation paid for an outbreak in 2021, but not finalised till 2023.

Number of imported animals found to be affected by a notifiable disease in 2023

There were no imported animals found to be infected by a notifiable disease in 2023.

Formal enforcement actions under the Animal Health Act 1981 and other animal health and welfare legislation by local authorities in 2023

Convictions achieved under the Animal Health Act 1981 and other animal health and welfare legislation

There were no convictions achieved under the Animal Health Act 1981 during 2023.

Number of visits and enforcement action taken

Category	Subcategory	Visits	Oral or Written Advice	Written Notification Warnings	Formal written Notices	Reported to Procurator Fiscal	Other
Welfare (see note 1)	Farm	1,811	1,126	70	41	1	0
Welfare	Transport	1,972	155	15	6	0	0
Welfare	Market	666	105	6	7	0	0
Traceability	Identification, Movement and Records	1,506	731	23	17	1	0
Biosecurity (see note 2)	Farm and Transport	448	122	17	5	0	0
Biosecurity	Market	78	53	0	0	0	0
Animal by-products (ABP) and Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)	Visits and interventions	362	120	12	7	0	0

Notes:

1. This is the number of welfare visit undertaken that were programmed, part of planned interventions, or projects, or in response to complaints
2. This is the number of visits where biosecurity has been considered separately, out with a general market or farm visit.

Number of complaints, service requests and livestock animals inspected

Category	Total
Number of animal health and welfare complaints made to Service (see note 1)	1,688
Number of service requests made to Service (see note 2)	1,947
Livestock animals inspected (see note 3)	597,082

Notes:

1. This is the number of requests or complaints received that have required action or investigation by local authority Animal Health and Welfare Officers.
2. This figure includes requests for service from consumers (not complaints), businesses and other agencies.
3. This is the total number of animals that were inspected or assessed in markets and other premises or holdings. This includes animals inspected for fitness, identification or health at markets and does not require that an examination takes place.

Summary of alternative enforcement interventions taken

- Attended Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and Police Scotland events to help and highlight help available for farmers (sheep scab event was very well received by local farmers).
- Worked closely with the Scottish Government Rural Payments and Services Division (RPID) on farm visits, and received feedback if any issues occur on farm, so further local authority (LA) assistance required, or just to advise no further visit is required by the LA.
- Joint work with SG RPID and APHA in relation to problem farmers.
- Attendance at numerous agricultural shows.
- Checking on BVD (bovine viral diarrhoea) compliance in the area to try and reduce referrals of non-compliance.
- Working with the council's comms team to raise awareness of avian influenza; prepared and maintained a locally targeted web page.
- Regular email updates to animal keepers/farms informing them about the preventive measures to be taken in case of high risk of outbreak of disease, i.e. avian influenza.
- Worked with the National Framers Union of Scotland (NFUS) to target information to specific areas where low compliance in the use of authorised carriers to up-lift animal by-products (ABP) was identified.
- Worked with a multi-agency team to prevent establishment of illegally released wild boar becoming established in the Argyll and Bute Council area with specific reference to risk of African swine fever (ASF).
- Dog breeding premises inspected.

- Puppy seller intel work with SSPCA (Scottish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).
- Conducted investigations into three suspected illegally imported dogs.
- Liaised with the council countryside rangers regarding signage for dog worrying in problem areas.
- Attended meetings with other local authorities and agencies regarding joint issues.
- The revision of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, Part 2, section 32 has been economically advantageous with less suffering for animals that require seizing. Prior to that change, it often caused delay in obtaining the appropriate warrants.
- As an urban local authority with only five premises with any livestock (four farms and one care home that has a pig), all premises were visited in the previous year without any issues.
- Highland Council have been targeting transport in 2023 with inspections of vehicles and trailers at all markets in our area.
- Attended an arranged meeting with Police Scotland and farmers regarding security.
- Participation in multi-agency groups, e.g. Rural Crime Group.
- Had a number of illegally imported animals that were either placed in quarantine or euthanised.
- Had an investigation into illegally imported pigeons and an ongoing investigation into the transportation of live chickens.
- Having an abattoir located in the authority area, North Lanarkshire Council have dialogue with the state vet located there in relation to welfare, single ear tags, movements, etc., for animals being transported to the facility.
- Due to current reductions in staffing, the Environmental Health Department has seen a significant negative impact on Officers' ability to undertake planned and proactive works in regards to the statutory duties required under the 1981 Animal Health Act. However, Shetland Islands Council funds and staffs a Local Animal Health Scheme to ensure that Shetland retains its status of being free of bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) and sheep scab. All sheep imports are tested for enzootic abortion in sheep (EAE), caseous lymphadenitis (CLA) and maedi visna (MV), as well as being treated for sheep scab upon entry to the islands. The scheme ensures that all flocks are screened for EAE and MV. Cattle entering Shetland are tested for BVD and Johnes disease. Cattle herds in Shetland are screened annually for BVD and Johnes disease. As a part of the scheme, vets regularly inspect animals to ensure compliance with the scheme and the council is proactive in engaging the industry in animal health issues.
- Required one farmer to depopulate their stock to more manageable levels.
- Attendance at the Doune and Dunblane Agricultural Society Show, the Stirling Agricultural Show, the Gargunnoch Farmers Club Agricultural Show and the Scottish Premier Meat Exhibition. Joined-up approach with APHA and SG RPID regarding the seizure and subsequent sale of 27 cattle under welfare grounds.

Attendance at the Scottish Government's regional engagement session on dog control and dangerous dogs. Managed the effective response to two outbreaks of HPAI in Clackmannanshire and Stirling. Undertook informal pre-licence inspection (under The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021) advisory visits for four Animal Welfare Establishment's in our areas, which was a supportive initiative, as they did not require a licence before the new Regulations.

Notes: Alternative interventions are recorded to highlight additional work and areas covered. This may include attendance at agricultural shows, NFUS (National Farmers Union of Scotland) meetings; joint initiatives with APHA (the Animal and Plant Health Agency), police, SG RPID (Scottish Government Rural Payments and Services); leaflets and information, etc.

Key Performance Measure

High Risk Visits

Average of high risk programmed visits inspected 33.3%

Notes: This is the figure for High Risk agricultural premises visited by local authorities, but also includes visits that have not been carried out as a result of these premises being visited by APHA staff as part of their pre-planned visit plan. As a result, this prevents penalising local authorities who are using a joined-up approach to prevent double visits by different enforcers for similar purposes.

Definitions

Oral or Written advice: There is little difference between whether the advice is written or oral. If it is advice and for enforcement purposes, it should be grouped together. This would also be useful, as it gives an indication of the level of complaint businesses.

Written correspondence or warnings: This indicates that there is a need for improvements following the intervention of animal health and welfare officers. This includes all letters and written notifications issued by the officer or the service that requires improvements or actions to be taken.

Formal written notices: This should include any formal statutory Notices that are issued under the Animal Health Act 1981, or other animal health and welfare Regulations or Orders.

Reported to Procurator Fiscal: We record the number of successful cases reported to Procurator Fiscal, as this is not the same as the prosecution reports. There may well be cases that are not progressed by the Crown or they may issue a

fiscal warning. It would be helpful to determine this, as it will provide an overview on the work of Wildlife and Environmental Crime Unit.

Other: This includes Notices issued by the Sheriff including disposal orders in terms of livestock seizures.



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