Draft Minutes
ICAR Sub-Committee for Animal Identification

January 25-26, 2016

Attendance:

SC Members:

Ken Evers (Chairman)
Kaivo Ilves
Jay Mattison (45 minute skype call)
Folkert Onken
Erik Rehben
Henry Richardson
Andie Dimitriadu (ICAR Secretariat)
Jussi Maki-Hokkonen (ICAR Secretariat)

Invitees:

Susanne Gäckler (DLG)
Pieter Hogewerf (IMA)
Jonas Persson (RYK)
Aude Didier (CETIM)

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting

The Chair, Ken Evers welcomed the participants and invited them to introduce themselves one by one on behalf of Andie who joins the group the first time.
The agenda was approved as circulated.
Jussi Maki-Hokkonen and Andie Dimitriadou of ICAR Secretariat were appointed to be rapporteurs.

2. Approval of the minutes of SC phone-conference, October 16, 2015.

The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Reports from the participants.

Chair, Ken Evers:

Ken reported about the previous week meeting of ISO WG3 in Innsbruck. Among the group still prevails considerable malcontent about the way the ICAR device certification program was implemented. The WG3 also discussed some of the items in the agenda of this SC ID meeting, including joint development of a new UHF standard, revision of the ICAR webpage of certified and registered RFID devices and reporting of the misuse cases against ISO 11784 and ISO 11785. Further details given under the concerned agenda items below.

Secretariat, Jussi

For the information of the SC Jussi presented the list of all ID device tests successfully completed in 2015. The conclusions could be summarized:

RFID: Since 2012 there is a steady decrease in conformance tests. Last year the total number of tests were 40 down from 47 in 2014. The total of 14 re-certification tests compensated the decrease in the primary conformance tests.

Material performance test: The first 3 RFID devices and 14 out of 18 submitted plastic ear tags were certified. This was a positive result as in the previous year only 3 out of 13 submitted plastic ear tags were certified.

One of the reasons for the steady downfall in conformance tests was suspected to be the closure of a number manufacturers and production being concentrated to fewer and larger manufacturing plants. It was predicted that the future number of tests would stabilise to the current level.

Jussi completed his report by informing the SC colleagues about his announced retirement starting from 1 June 2016. He thanked the current and past members of this group for the challenge and satisfaction he has received from working with this group and continues as usual to the end of May. He further introduced Andie as his most welcomed successor. Andie will adapt easily to ICAR environment where she already worked 6 years ago and is well known to all secretariat staff. This meeting gives her and SC members a first face to face opportunity to know each other.

SC member reports:

Erik Rehben: Reported about the field trials in France on UHF technology adapted to small ruminants, starting from May-June 2016 for 6 months on 50-60 farms and one collecting center. Preliminary results are expected by end of this year. Trials involving cattle will also be implemented as soon as possible.

Henry Richardson: Noted that a couple of UK-based manufacturers are missing from the list presented by Jussi. Reported that in UK he is involved with an analysis of a group of ID device manufacturers regarding their attitude to the UK national standard on ID devices. He is further trying to find out the procedure the UK Competent Authority is taking decisions about ID devices officially marketed in the country. The information can be used for the ID devices marketing strategy.

Kaivo Ilves: Nil to report relevant to this SC

Folkert Onken: Topical in Germany is the digitalization of ID and animal recording particularly in association of AMS.

Reports from the laboratories:

DLG, Susanne Gäckler:

UHF becoming increasingly important for herd management purposes, more than RFID for identification. UHF, however is problematic for the segregation of a single animal from a group and for that reason the development and certification of readers is important for UHF.

Ken reported that Australia is watching UHF from a distance, while New Zealand is interested. He expressed his concern regarding the use of UHF in the slaughterhouse and its effectiveness.

Ken encouraged the group to actively share any information regarding UHF or any other new technology. For example, database structure for UHF will ultimately be an important issue.

It was generally agreed that for any UHF questions that the laboratories might have for the manufacturers, they should contact the ICAR Secretariat, who would then contact the manufacturers. Any communication should pass through the Secretariat and not be done directly between manufacturers and test centers.

RYK, Jonas Persson:
Jonas reported that the UHF discussion is starting in Denmark as well – he will share information with the SC. Jonas raised the problem he is facing with the preliminary tests of plastic ear tags of which the other pair is a tissue sampling tag. This problem is discussed under a later item in these minutes.

IMA, Pieter Hogewerf
Pieter reminded about the interest of ISO WG3 group to be able to use the ICAR standards of material and environmental performance for development them to become ISO standards. The Krakow SC meeting wanted to postpone such consideration in view of needs to review the protocols and procedures during the initial period of implementation, at least through the first two years.

4. New Guideline/web-list revisions:
4.1 Re-certification of external ID devices (plastic ear tags and RFID ear tags):
The required re-certification procedure as now stipulated in Sections 10.7 and 10.8 is the full test. It is proposed to be modified following the 2014 relaxation of the re-certification for the RFID conformance tested devices based on the limited test procedure. The first devices due for re-certification in this category will be late 2016.
The SC decided to apply the Preliminary Test protocol of 10.7 and 10.8 for re-certification of the devices in these two categories and for checking that they are the same as the originally certified devices. The SC further decided to discuss in the coming SC meeting in Chile how to deal with the devices which fail the re-certification but might meet the standard. In addition, the issue of monitoring if a product is still on the market must be included as a rolling item in the SC agenda.

4.2 Develop procedures for ID device validation for CAs
End 2015 Service-ICAR received requests from the CAs of three countries to validate ID devices procured under public funding in those countries. These requests are an indication that validation test services could become a major service opportunity for Service-ICAR particularly in the countries where there is limited experience in tendering procedures and quality control of the procured ID devices. To these first validation tests Service-ICAR has decided to respond on a case by case basis. For the future cases it is however necessary to prepare a standardised test procedure most likely based on the review of the preliminary test procedure. The review needs also to propose the content of the validation test report and the way to communicate the results to the CAs. **To review the issues involved Ken Evers was ready to be in contact with**

both the key manufacturers and selected CAs and report back to the SC the various options for consideration in the SC meeting in Chile next October.

4.3 Establish the procedure for selection of the samples for device tests

The current Section 10 of the ICAR guideline does not stipulate the way the device samples should be selected to guarantee a random set of samples for the primary certification or re-certification tests. Limited progress was made in the discussion of this topic. The idea was supported **that the samples should be randomly selected from the most recent batches of the production, even from more than one production plant when applicable. The resulting guide should be a living document and the point of departure could be the document of Kaivo Ilves prepared for the SC Cracow meeting as his proposal of field sampling of ID devices. Who to act?**

4.4 Re-editing of the whole text of Section 10

Some necessary initial revisions to the text of the 2014 approved Section 10 were identified in the June 2015 SC meeting in Krakow. Of those the SC has already developed modifications and implemented into practice the decisions about barcode length, heat treatment temperature before pull test and device change notification procedure to replace the old family test concept. This meeting decided a new procedure for re-certification of permanent ID devices (item 4.1). There are further revision needs identified such as: colour stability of plastic ear tags, reusability[1], define preliminary test for tissue sample and pig tags, review and unify the terminology in the whole Section 10 including the annexes. Revisions will be reflected to the next Synthesis issue as well.

Ken Evers announced that he was ready to do the review so that the SC could evaluate the first draft revision in the planned SC conference call in April and approve the new text during the SC conference call meeting in June. After the June meeting and after the subsequent ICAR Board approval the revised Section 10 would go for comments by ICAR members and finally approved by the ICAR General Assembly in Chile in October.

4.5 Review of the ICAR web-lists of certified/registered ID devices

Andie presented on screen the proposed web list modifications which were resulting from her discussions with colleagues in the ICAR secretariat, Martin, Jussi, Cesare and Elena. The most important proposed changes included:

- Change the wording of the page title
- Separate the material tested RFID devices into a distinct own category with equal visibility as the material tested plastic ear tags.
- Shorten the lists of certified and registered RFID devices by grouping manufacturers alphabetically. The individual devices lists would open by clicking the manufacturer name.
- Block the top row to remain visible while scrolling down
- Several new filtration functions would be introduced to facilitate searches by parameter

[1] In particular, it was agreed that any unfastening of the tag during testing would mean that part of the tag could be reused, and therefore would lead to a failed test.

- The need for all current columns would be reviewed
- Move the link to the list of registered devices at the bottom of the page

The overall aim would be to make the list more attractive and user friendly.
From the above list the SC was welcoming all but the third item and claimed that each certified/registered device had to be visible because that facilitated the user choices. In addition both the original certification and re-certification dates should be visible.

Ken Evers then reported the requirements which originated from the discussions in the previous week ISO WG3 meeting which requested the macro division to be:

1. Livestock / Companion animals (Injectables) Divisions would be supported by pictures to assist
2. Under Livestock Division would be: RFID / Visual; the Companion Animals division would immediately display all certified and registered devices in one list
3. Under the RFID division, would be the list of all certified devices and at the top of the page there would be a link to the registered devices. The registered devices page would include all products both certified and registered.
4. Under the Visual division, the same principle would apply.
5. In the registered devices page for both RFID and Visual, there should be an option that for a fee, a manufacturer could state that a registered device (non-certified) was still available for market). This would also apply to the Companion Animal identification page.

The SC members supported the proposal originating from WG3 but Jussi and Andie were sceptical and wanted to take the recommendations of the SC to further discussion and evaluation by the Secretariat team.

For the list of conventional ear tags, a number of changes were discussed and endorsed, mainly relating to wording, grouping of the four tables into two, and removal of some of the columns.

5. ICAR strategy with Competent Authorities – progress since the October 2015 SC ID

Jussi M-H reported that as agreed in October 2015 SC meeting the ICAR Secretariat sent a circular letter to all ICAR MOs asking them to identify the national CA in their country including the contact person and e-address. It was done and by this moment some 28 responses have been received. Still many more contacts will be needed to make ICAR and Service-ICAR efficient in direct communication with CAs globally.
In addition to the Synthesis document which is targeted to the CAs Ken Evers informed that he is preparing a 1-2 page ICAR promotional letter which would explain the benefits to CAs of direct communication and collaboration with ICAR in selection of certified ID devices and their periodic quality validation. ICAR is further planning to develop and make available on the web a standard set of tender document to help the CAs to follow professional procurement procedures. In plans is also visits of the SC Chair and ICAR CE to as many Ministries of Agriculture as possible in South America before the October ICAR Session to promote ICAR – CA

direct communication. **The possibility of a meeting with OIE should also be sought, Ken to follow up.**
The SC gave full support to these initiatives of which the progress will be reported in the coming SC meetings.

6. Prospects for ISO/ICAR collaboration for development of test protocols for ID devices based on UHF technology

The Chair reported that in the previous week the ISO WG3 meeting in Innsbruck had discussed this matter and it had been agreed to form a joint group of experts with the aim that by the end of 2016 the group would present a draft protocol for the testing and certification of UHF devices. The first issue on the agenda of the joint group is the number coding and then the communication between the reader and the device. From livestock point of view the most critical issue to solve relates to segregation of a single animal from a group. Thus the certification of readers for UHF devices is important.

7. Discuss the need for a Technology Forum with key Manufacturers

This agenda item originates from the Secretariat priority action plan for SC ID and SC RSD in 2016. The response of the SC ID was discussed in the skype communication of the SC members with Jay Mattison in the afternoon 25. January. The SC conclusion was that this year SC will organize a joint meeting with manufacturers during the ICAR Session in October in Chile. The purpose would be to plan the joint meeting with a more tightly planned program than the *add hoc* meetings in the past. **Ken will take the lead to propose the theme/s and the main speakers from both sides.**

8. Review of 2015 misuse cases against ISO 11784 and ISO 11785

The secretariat had pre-circulated the summary list of all device misuse cases in 2015 with details of dates of communications and whether the case was solved or not. The general observation is that all the problem cases are in the non-livestock sector. The most serious and still unsolved case is the issue around the device marketed by the US company PetChip 911. The latest position is that the suspects against Chinese Wuxi Fofia company have not been justified. On the other hand ICAR (CE) still waits for a response of PetChip911 to his latest letter to the company.
Due to the sensitive nature of the information in the ICAR list **it was agreed to keep it in the closed circulation within the SC and the Secretary of the ISO WG3**.

9. Ring Test status

9.1 Current situation

The round of ring tests between IMA, DLG and SAIT was completed last autumn. The results were not satisfactory and it was difficult to understand the values and deviations in the results. Since Ken Evers has been working with the test laboratories to develop a SOP for distribution of samples by laboratories in strict adherence to the ISO protocol on ring tests. **Ken to finalize the SOPs before the next ring test. The ring test of 2016 will be carried out following the agreed SOP and ISO standard.**

9.2 SAIT audit results

Ken Evers reported that the audit was positive which he and Jussi M-H carried out 14 January 2016 in Calgary. SAIT has already completed the critical action modifications in the laboratory QA Manual as requested by the audit team. Also the final edits to the umbrella contract between Service-ICAR and SAIT have been settled and is ready for mutual signatures by the parties.

The SC endorsed the audit report and recommends ICAR to approve the SAIT laboratory for testing RFID devices for certification.

In the follow-up discussion about the ICAR need for further laboratory capacity the SC together with the laboratory people at present came to the conclusion that the future additions of capacity should be based on ICAR invitation only. The reason was that it is doubtful if the foreseen number of test applications could offer a remunerative business even for the existing laboratories. **The decision re the approval of laboratories to be communicated to WG3 by Martin.** Ken expressed deep thanks to the laboratories for their exceptional work.

9. Next SC ID meeting

The SC agreed to hold the next SC ID meeting as a conference call on the 15th of April 2016 at 10.00 CET.

10. Any other business

- Henry shared the draft of the international animal identity standards. Any changes to be sent to Henry for discussion in the April 15th conference call. The aim is to have the draft in the Guidelines submitted for approval of the General Assembly in Chile.
- The possibility of a SC meeting in Chile, including possibility of meeting with manufacturers, to be discussed in the April 15th conference call
- Pieter raised the issue of mechanical testing of injectable devices. It was agreed that ICAR should develop test procedures and that the testing should be part of laboratories' current accreditation. He further reminded that the registration of devices is the mandate of ICAR as the RA for ISO but the certification of devices is an additional service of ICAR.
- Susanne and Pieter raised the issue of the matrix procedure and if it is going to be implemented. Ken referred to the document on re-testing by Kaivo/Henry. Long discussion was around the issue of the external/independent expert and if the test centres can be considered as such. Ken will read the re-testing document to be finally discussed at the April 15th conference call.
- Ken expressed the SC's deep thanks and appreciation to Jussi for his work and dedication all these years.

12. Meeting Closed

The meeting was closed at 13.43 CET on 26th January 2016.