

legal arrangements will be rolled over pending the development of the new strategy.

Therefore, there will continue to be uncertainty for regional councils over the vector control programme budget in the short term.

We understand that the worst case scenario is that the funding will be limited to the same level as for the 2000/01 year.

I *attach* copies of the press release from Minister Sutton and a copy of the text of a letter that will be sent to all regional councils by the AHB.



John Hutchings
Strategy Leader
Environment & Infrastructure
Local Government New Zealand

cc. Nick Hancox, Animal Health Board

REVIEW OF NPMS FOR BOVINE TB

You will be aware that in October the Animal Health Board presented to the Minister of Agriculture a proposal for a review of the National Pest Management Strategy for Bovine TB.

As detailed in the attached news release, the Government has agreed there is a need for a strategy to achieve official freedom from bovine Tb in a reasonable time frame (perhaps 12 to 15 years). The Government has also agreed to consider a significant increase in Government funding to support such a strategy.

To this end Government has instructed MAF and Treasury to work with the Animal Health Board and other stakeholders to revise the Board's strategy proposal.

In practice this means that a proposal to amend the Tb strategy will not be notified in time for a new NPMS to be in place by 1 July 2001. However, section 88 of the Biosecurity Act 1993 is clear that provided a review is commenced by a properly notified proposal prior to the expiry of the current strategy, the current legal arrangements can be rolled over. In doing this there appears to be no need to be constrained by current funding arrangements (other than levy funding) as these are discretionary. For example, any increase in Crown funding could be fed into next year's programmes under such a roll-over of legal arrangements.

In terms of revision of the strategy proposal we will obviously need to consult with you early in the process. In the meantime however, we appreciate you have to continue with your annual plan and budget process for the 2001/02 financial year. In this context considerable uncertainty remains as to what the 2001/02 vector programme budget will look like. Therefore at this stage it would seem prudent for you to budget on the basis of maintaining current (2000/01) vector control expenditure.

We will be in touch again early in the New Year. In the meantime, please accept my compliments of the festive season and thanks for your Council's continuing support and forbearance.

Yours sincerely

Robert Isbister
General Manager

Hon Jim Sutton Member of Parliament for Aoraki

**Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Trade Negotiations,
Minister for Rural Affairs**



19 December 2000

Media Statement

More work to be done on TB management plan

MAF officials and the Animal Health Board will carry out further work on the review of the National Bovine TB strategy before it would be notified, Agriculture Minister Jim Sutton said today.

In October this year, the Animal Health Board presented a proposal to the Mr Sutton for a major increase in funding for a ten-year strategy aimed at achieving official freedom from Bovine TB.

Mr Sutton said the Government supported the objective of achieving freedom from Bovine TB, but had questions about the expenditure levels proposed by the board, and whether the achievement of the Bovine TB freedom objective within ten years was realistic.

He said the Government accepted that more money needed to be spent on the Bovine TB strategy and was committed to an increase in Crown expenditure.

“But we do have questions about how much that increase should be and how fast we should try to go. A 12-year, or 15-year strategy, might be equally acceptable.”

Mr Sutton said the protection of our international trading position was paramount and the Government had to consider how best to achieve that.

“I have directed MAF and Treasury officials to do further work with the Animal Health Board and its stakeholders to present me with a revised proposal as soon as possible.”

The current Bovine TB strategy expires on 1 July 2001, but Mr Sutton said existing legal arrangements could be extended, provided a revised strategy was notified before that date.

Mr Sutton said he also wanted reassurance that the Bovine TB control programme was being managed as efficiently as possible.

The budget for Bovine TB vector control for the current year is \$38.4m, of which the Crown contributes \$20.3m. The balance comes from farmers and regional authorities. A further \$17.7 million a year is spent on Bovine TB disease control, funded by farmers.

- The Animal Health Board has proposed an increase in total programme expenditure to \$85 m per year with a Crown contribution of \$39.7m (figures GST excl).

AHB Acting Chairman Alan Pollock said the Board welcomed Government's commitment to the goal of freedom from Bovine TB.

"Although we have been making good progress towards that goal in recent years, it is very clear an increased effort is needed to maintain progress and to achieve our goal.

"I expect there will be some disappointment that our original proposal will not be notified but with all parties including Government now committed to the objective of official freedom from Bovine TB at the earliest practical date and to the increased funding that this entails, we will now work through the changes required to put together a strategy and a time frame that all the partners are comfortable with."

For more information, contact: CATHIE BELL on 04 4719855 or 025 998467

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