

UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE



UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

**CRE**

CENTRE FOR RURAL ECONOMY

**THE 2001 FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CRISIS  
AND THE MANAGEMENT OF LESSON LEARNING**

**Neil Ward**

**Andrew Donaldson**

**Philip Lowe**

**Centre for Rural Economy Working Paper Series**

**Working Paper 67**

**November 2002**

**THE 2001 FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE CRISIS  
AND THE MANAGEMENT OF LESSON LEARNING**

**Neil Ward<sup>1</sup>**

**Andrew Donaldson<sup>2</sup>**

**Philip Lowe<sup>3</sup>**

**Abstract**

The 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) epidemic cost over £8billion and was one in a succession of crises to strike the British food and farming industries. This paper examines the institutional response to FMD and the processes of inquiry that followed. It argues that the institutional response to the disease was too tightly focussed on agricultural interests. Moreover, subsequently, a highly compartmentalised approach to lesson-learning nationally has concentrated on certain aspects of the crisis, with the result that important lessons, of a more holistic and integrated nature, risk being overlooked.

<sup>1</sup> School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT

<sup>2</sup> Department of Geography, University of Hull, Hull, HU6 7R

<sup>3</sup> Centre for Rural Economy, School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU

## INTRODUCTION

The UK food and farming industries have suffered a succession of crises over recent years. The most recent has been the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) epidemic in 2001, but this has followed major public health scares concerning Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in 1996 and salmonella in eggs in 1988. It has been estimated that expenditure on dealing with problems such as BSE, FMD and classical swine fever has been at least £15 billion (Royal Society, 2002, p.131). Each crisis is followed by efforts to learn lessons. Lesson-learning can take a variety of forms. The BSE crisis was the focus of an extensive public inquiry that took from January 1998 to October 2000 (BSE Inquiry, 2000). Cross-party Parliamentary Select Committees may investigate crises, as they did with the salmonella-in-eggs affair (House of Commons Agriculture Committee, 1989). Special commissions may be established or, more commonly in recent years, 'task forces' may be called into action.

FMD dominated agriculture and the countryside for much of 2001. The first case was confirmed on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2001, the day after it had been suspected in pigs at an abattoir in Essex. At least 57 farms had already been infected by the time the disease was first confirmed (National Audit Office, 2002, p.1). The volume of animal movements at this time of year, coupled with the fact that the disease had not been identified for at least 10 days at the farm in Northumberland considered to be the most likely source of the outbreak, were the reasons for the extensive initial infection. By the time the disease was finally eradicated at the end of September 2001, more than six million farm animals had been slaughtered. The direct cost to the public sector has been estimated at over £3 billion, with the cost to the private sector estimated at over £5

billion (National Audit Office, 2002, p.1). At the height of the crisis, in mid-April, more than 10,000 vets, soldiers, field and support staff, and thousands more working for contractors, were engaged in fighting the disease, and more than 100,000 animals were being slaughtered and disposed of each day.

This paper presents an analysis of the institutional response to FMD and the process of learning the lessons from the crisis. It first discusses the nature of policy learning, and the role of crises in triggering policy change. It then sets out the background to, and key features of decision-making during the FMD crisis. Finally, it considers the processes of lesson-learning that were set in train in 2001. The paper draws upon personal interviews conducted with key actors involved in the crisis. These included ministers, civil servants, scientists, representatives of farming, countryside, tourism and other public bodies, and members of the Government's Rural Task Force.<sup>1</sup>

## **POLICY LEARNING AND CRISES**

Until the 1980s, studies of public policy change generally adopted an institutionalist approach that saw government as an essentially passive actor driven by external social pressures and conflicts. However, increasing interest in processes of 'policy learning' began to call into question this view of policy change. Bennett and Howlett identify three

---

<sup>1</sup> This project, entitled "Learning Lessons from the Foot and Mouth Crisis", was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (award number R000223758) and ran from November 2001 to April 2002. Approximately 20 interviews were conducted during this period. We would like to thank the ESRC for funding the work, the interviewees who gave of their time to be interviewed, and the participants at a research seminar in London who commented on the research findings and on a draft of this paper.

distinct types of learning: government learning; lesson drawing; and social learning. Some characteristics of these types are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Types of Learning**

Learning type	Who Learns?	Learns what?	To what effect?
Government Learning	State Officials	Process related	Organizational change
Lesson Drawing	Policy Networks	Instruments	Programme change
Social Learning	Policy Communities	Ideas	Paradigm shift

(Source: Bennett and Howlett, 1992)<sup>2</sup>

Prominent among current approaches to policy learning is the ‘Advocacy Coalition Framework’ (see, for example, Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993). This approach is based on the view that alliances with coherent mutual interests and values (termed advocacy coalitions) can emerge from within a policy community and influence the community’s direction. Notably, the approach calls for the study of policy change over the medium term — say ten or more years — to gain sufficient perspective on any learning processes at work (Sabatier, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> There is a debate in the policy studies literature on the precise definitions of policy communities and policy networks (see, for example, Dowding, 1995). They were originally used interchangeably, but policy networks have come to be seen as relatively small groups of political actors, while policy communities have come to be seen as more extensive entities, distinguished by some commonality of interest and sharing a common culture and understanding.

Nevertheless, relatively short-lived perturbations, or ‘focusing events’, may mobilize coalitions and thus induce change in the policy process (Kingdon, 1995; Birkland, 1998). A crisis can be just such an event (Birkland and Nath, 2000). Kingdon (1995) has used the ‘garbage can model’ to examine the role of focusing events in the policy process. The model was first put forward by Cohen *et al.* (1972) in their celebrated article “*A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice*” which sought to explain decision making in organizations. What they particularly addressed was how solutions adopted by organisations are not specifically devised for the problems they purport to solve. This argumentation was widely discussed in the social sciences for its challenge to prevailing notions of the rationality of organisational behaviour, and was the start of the development of other theoretical frameworks taking irrational decision making into account (*e.g.* Kingdon 1995).

Cohen *et al.* argue that an organization “is a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision makers looking for work” (1972, p.2). That means that, in an organization, problems and solutions are not necessarily related to each other in a simple linear or deductive relationship. This arises from the specialisation of tasks within organisations. Various individuals within an organisation have the role to develop solutions. Normally these solutions are not needed and are therefore shelved (*i.e.* disposed of in the garbage can). At any particular point in time an organisation also faces or pursues an array of problems which it must characterise or prioritise, or, alternatively, avoid or neglect (*i.e.* dispose in the garbage can). The garbage can, therefore, typically contains various

potential solutions and various potential problems for the organisation. In the model, the garbage can is seen to act as a reservoir on which organisational decision making can draw. The outcome therefore depends on the mix in the can. Solutions and problems have an equal status as separate streams in the organisation. Which solutions are ready for airing and which problems are on people's mind are critical. When a given solution is proposed, the participants may regard it as irrelevant to the problem. Or, even more likely, the participants have fixed on a course of action and cast about for a problem to which it is the solution. So, a given solution is looking for a problem.

Garbage can theory was initially developed to explain decision-making within organizations. Several studies have subsequently applied the idea to the analysis of the national political system as an organization (*e.g.* Kingdon 1995). One important insight is that a crisis can be a significant event in accelerating (or hampering) reformist agendas, because of the way it disturbs the balance of power between pro-and anti-reform coalitions.

The next section of the paper briefly sets out the chronology of the 2001 FMD crisis and highlights its key characteristics. These are, *first*, that contingency planning was insufficient to cope with the unprecedented scale of the outbreak. *Second*, the scale of the subsequent epidemic was in part a function of changes to the structure of the livestock industry in which public policy was implicated. *Third*, in the initial stages of the outbreak, the problem was approached as almost wholly an *agricultural* issue of animal health, with the consequence that the measures taken to address the issue precipitated a much wider crisis in local rural economies beyond farming.

## **THE CHARACTERISTICS AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE 2001 CRISIS**

Provisions for FMD control come under a European framework. Under Directive 90/423 all Member States are required to prepare an FMD contingency plan. The UK's plan was endorsed by the European Commission in 1992, and is subject to regular updates, the most recent prior to 2001 being in July 2000. Local contingency plans also complement the national plan. Despite meeting accepted international standards these plans and procedures proved inadequate in 2001. Contingency planning was based on the likelihood of there being a maximum of 10 FMD cases at any one time, but the initial scale of the 2001 epidemic was far greater. The Commission's own worst case scenario for contingency planning is for 150 cases in an outbreak.<sup>3</sup>

Since the previous serious FMD outbreak in 1967, the UK sheep sector had undergone major changes which exacerbated the 2001 epidemic. The number of sheep and lambs in the UK had risen by almost 50 per cent, to more than 42 million in the intervening period (Royal Society, 2002, p.11). The Common Agricultural Policy's sheepmeat regime, in particular, stimulated a marked growth in sheep numbers between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s. Sheepmeat regime rules encourage farmers to have the full quota of sheep for which they claim subsidies during the inspection period in February/March. As a result, a much greater volume of stock is bought and sold between farmers, with sheep often subject to several moves between different livestock markets in quick succession. The scale of sheep movements were even a surprise to

---

<sup>3</sup> Dr Iain Anderson, oral evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 23 July 2002, Q.4.

MAFF. The Ministry initially under-estimated their scale, and had to revise their estimate to Number 10 in the early days of the outbreak from one million movements to two million (Lessons to be Learned Inquiry Report, 2002, p.30).

The day after FMD symptoms were spotted at the abattoir in Essex, FMD was confirmed and the European Commission was informed of the outbreak. The Commission banned all meat and live animal exports from the UK the next day, in accordance with EU legislation. This decision itself was immediately viewed as another blow to an already beleaguered farming industry. The Guardian's headline of 22<sup>nd</sup> February summed up the public and political weariness felt beyond the farming community: "Farms: yet another crisis". There was an urgent need to stamp out FMD and return to farmers their ability to export. With confirmed cases of FMD over 250 miles apart, the Minister of Agriculture, Nick Brown, imposed a ban on all livestock movements.

Retrospective analysis, co-ordinated by the Chief Veterinary Officer, traced the most likely route of early infections. This suggested that Burnside Farm, a pig-finishing unit in Northumberland, was the index case. The virus is thought to have arrived at Burnside in meat or meat products fed to the pigs, possibly as early as January 26<sup>th</sup>. Infected pigs from Burnside were sent to Essex on February 8<sup>th</sup> and February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Stock on nearby Prestwick Hall Farm in Northumberland (and on 9 other local premises) were infected by airborne virus. Infected sheep, not yet showing any outward signs of disease, were sent to Hexham Market from Prestwick Hall Farm on February 13<sup>th</sup>. These sheep were sold to a Lancashire-based dealer who took them, along with 174 others, to Longtown Market for sale on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Spread of the disease

proceeded through movement of stock, people and equipment. On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February at least 24,500 sheep passed through Longtown Market, with 181 purchasers involved in the sales (DEFRA, 2002).

The extent of the crisis became apparent over the following days as FMD was confirmed in Devon (25<sup>th</sup> February), Wales (27<sup>th</sup>), and Cumbria (28<sup>th</sup>). At this stage, the focus was entirely on the plight of the livestock farming industry. A MAFF news release on February 22<sup>nd</sup> urged the public to “postpone unnecessary visits which might bring them into contact with livestock farms”. Other organisations acted likewise to limit the risk of disease spread. On February 23<sup>rd</sup> the Northumberland National Park Authority erected signs closing all footpaths within the Park. The following day, the Lake District National Park Authority introduced a voluntary ban on the use of its footpaths. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, local authorities - who already had powers to close footpaths in Infected Areas (minimum 10km radius round cases of the disease) - were given emergency powers to close all footpaths and rights of way throughout the Controlled Area (defined by the Commission Decision as the whole of Great Britain). The first case in Scotland was confirmed in Dumfries and Galloway on March 1<sup>st</sup>. With outbreaks confirmed across Britain, vets began to be drafted in from overseas to help the over-stretched State Veterinary Service.

MAFF issued guidance to local authorities on how to use their footpath closure powers: most were already putting in place blanket closures. In desperation, the Cumbria Tourist Board sent information to all of its members stating that it was still possible for visitors to come to Cumbria on holiday. However, many events and attractions across the country succumbed to the general close down. On March 8<sup>th</sup> it was announced

that the Cheltenham Festival had been cancelled to prevent the spread of FMD.

On Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup>, Nick Brown stated that the epidemic was “under control”. That day, the *Independent on Sunday* and *Observer* reported that losses to tourism were far outstripping those to the farming industry. On March 14<sup>th</sup> the Prime Minister announced that he was setting up a Rural Task Force that would report to him on the immediate and long-term implications of FMD for the wider rural economy. The first meeting of the Rural Task Force - incorporating representatives from a wide range of central Government departments, local and regional government, business, tourism and other rural interests - took place that day.

In the second half of March, faced not only with the rapid progression of the disease, but also with the gathering evidence of a deepening crisis in rural areas, the Government stepped up its crisis management measures. On March 15<sup>th</sup> Nick Brown announced that all animals within 3km of any infected farm in Cumbria would be slaughtered to create a firebreak to prevent further spread. On March 20<sup>th</sup> the Prime Minister began daily interdepartmental briefings, and Michael Meacher announced the first short-term relief measures for businesses affected by FMD.

On 21<sup>st</sup> March the first meeting took place of an ad hoc group of epidemiologists, informally established by the Chairman of the Food Standards Agency, that would go on to form the core of the FMD Science Group advising the Prime Minister. A short briefing following the meeting stressed the importance of reducing the time between identification and culling of Infected Premises and Contiguous Premises. That evening, a member of the group, Professor Roy Anderson, said on

BBC's *Newsnight* programme that, in a scientifically quantifiable sense, the FMD epidemic was "out of control", thus seeming to contradict what the Minister of Agriculture had said ten days earlier.

The following day the Government opened the Cabinet Office Briefing Room (COBR) to oversee disease control and strategy. COBR brought together representatives from all relevant Departments and was chaired initially by either the Prime Minister or Secretary of State for Defence. On March 23<sup>rd</sup> teams of epidemiological modellers from Imperial College and Edinburgh University reported their initial results. The next day, Tony Blair asked David King, his Chief Scientific Advisor, to assemble a group of scientific advisors, and the formal FMD Science Group met for the first time on the 26th. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, following the Group's initial advice, Nick Brown confirmed in Parliament that new slaughter targets of 24 hours for Infected Premises and 48 hours for Contiguous Premises had been agreed. During the week March 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, the Prime Minister effectively took personal control of disease strategy arrangements, advised via the Chief Scientific Advisor by the teams of epidemiologists. On March 28<sup>th</sup> MAFF, in conjunction with DETR, issued new guidance on access and a (voluntary) code for walkers, and DCMS issued guidance on opening tourist attractions. Opening up the countryside was now a priority. Government was also exploring alternative disease control options. On March 29<sup>th</sup> a vaccination seminar was held at Number 10.

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Tony Blair announced that local elections (and by implication the General Election) would be delayed from May 3<sup>rd</sup> until June 7<sup>th</sup>. Throughout April the media focus of the crisis shifted back and forth between farming and disease control and other rural interests. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Nick Brown wrote to livestock farmers advising them on what

steps they themselves should take to reinforce biosecurity. There was also growing impatience with footpath closures in some quarters. The Ramblers' Association complained on April 9<sup>th</sup> that 90 per cent of rights of way in disease free areas were still closed.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> May the Prime Minister gave a press briefing on progress with the disease. He acknowledged that it had been “a difficult time for the country”, but gave assurances that “we are getting the disease under control .... We are on the home straight”.<sup>4</sup> The following week, on May 9<sup>th</sup>, he announced that a General Election would be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>, and FMD began to fade from the national news. With the control measures apparently working, the continuing transmission of FMD was increasingly blamed on poor biosecurity. May ended with the Prime Minister refusing to commit to a full public inquiry into the epidemic and its handling. On June 8<sup>th</sup>, however, the newly returned Prime Minister did announce the creation of a new Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to replace MAFF. Other than Ministerial changes, the MAFF/DEFRA changeover made little difference to the personnel involved in managing FMD. The new Department did combine the old MAFF with some former DETR functions, including rural economy issues, promotion of countryside access and conservation. It thus encompassed both the disease fighting and the opening-up-the-countryside arms of central government.

The end of July saw a localised flare up of FMD, which led to the placing of a Restricted Infected Area - the so-called ‘blue box’ - around Thirsk in Yorkshire. Within a blue box strict biosecurity restrictions were imposed

---

<sup>4</sup> Number Ten Downing Street web page, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2001.

and locally enforced. On August 7<sup>th</sup>, a Restricted Infected Area was placed around Penrith in Cumbria, followed on the 26<sup>th</sup> by another around Hexham and Allendale in Northumberland. The new outbreaks had not been predicted by the epidemiological forecasts but with the disease no longer raging across the country control efforts could be concentrated on these localities. On September 1<sup>st</sup> DEFRA Minister Lord Whitty publicly ruled out the use of vaccination. The last confirmed case of the disease was on September 30<sup>th</sup> which brought the final total of confirmed cases of infected farms to 2,026.

## **THE INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE DISEASE AND CRISIS**

The initial institutional response to the outbreak was to see the problem wholly in agricultural terms. With hindsight, it is clear that this narrow view set in train a process of decision-making and a set of disease control measures that not only wreaked havoc on non-agricultural businesses and rural communities, but also locked the government into a course of action from which retreat, to accommodate a wider perspective, became very difficult.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> The analysis in this section draws upon several sources. *First*, the published reports from the various national inquiries contain much description and analysis of who did and said what. *Second*, the cd-rom published with the report of the Lessons Learned Inquiry is a particularly useful source. It contains pdf files for 550 submissions from interested parties, 62 notes of meetings between the Inquiry and the key people involved in the crisis, 36 notes of meetings with local and regional stakeholders, and 22 government publications. *Third*, the first author of this paper served as a member of the Rural Task Force and so was able to observe its work first hand.

## **The agricultural focus to disease control**

Reacting to FMD as purely an agricultural problem meant that the control strategy was that demanded by the agricultural community, and other interests were marginalised. This point is well illustrated by the decisions surrounding footpath closure. When asked by the Lessons Learned Inquiry about footpath closure, Nick Brown pointed to pressure from farmers nationally and locally as an important influence on the closure decision.<sup>6</sup> The NFU was calling for widespread closure. In the first week of the outbreak, on February 27<sup>th</sup>, NFU President Ben Gill said:

“It is imperative that every local council which has rural footpaths and rights of way within its boundaries closes them immediately. There must be a blanket ban across the country .... I implore everyone again: please, please stay away from the countryside” (quoted in the Lessons Learned Inquiry Report, p.63).

On the same day the same message came from the Prime Minister. In his internet broadcast he said:

“...though we are not at direct risk from this disease, we can play a part, unknowingly, in spreading it. FMD is a highly infectious virus which can be picked up by us on our boots, clothes and cars and carried many miles. By staying away from farmland, by keeping off any footpaths through or next to farms or open land with livestock, we can help the efforts to eradicate this disease. We are giving local authorities today the power to enforce the temporary closure of footpaths and rights of way, but we hope people will voluntarily stay away in any case” (quoted in Rural Task Force, 2001, para 6.4).

---

<sup>6</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Nick Brown, Baroness Hayman and Joyce Quinn, 22 April 2002, para.29.

Official advice from MAFF was more qualified. A circular on 6<sup>th</sup> March constituted the first formal guidance to local authorities. It said “[Power to restrict access outside Infected Areas] should only be used where there is evidence ... that to allow such unrestricted access would pose a potential risk of spreading the disease.” However, in the House of Commons on 28 February, Nick Brown, Minister for Agriculture, said “I deliberately left the issue to the discretion of local authorities, on the understanding that they would know best the local circumstances. It is for them to make an assessment of risk. ... Incidentally, if they want advice from me, I suggest that they act on a precautionary basis” (Hansard, 28 February 2001, Col. 921, quoted in Rural Task Force, 2001, para 6.5).

Of course, the public were keen to ‘do the right thing’ and people generally did stay away. A host of organisations closed sites or cancelled events. One former MAFF civil servant explained later that “whether a County Council closed its paths quickly became a symbol of their ‘support’ for the beleaguered farming community”.<sup>7</sup>

Former DETR officials explained to the Lessons Learned Inquiry that their Department had not been consulted on the decision to give local authorities powers to close footpaths, although they acknowledged that the decision had not been contentious at the time.<sup>8</sup> An agricultural imperative over-rode all other concerns. The Countryside Agency, the body with statutory responsibility for advising government on

---

<sup>7</sup> Submission to the Lessons Learned Inquiry by Dudley Coates (Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Submission Ref. 416.pdf, para. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Genie Turton & Chris Dunabin (ex-DETR), 25 April 2002, para.3.

countryside access issues, was also not consulted.<sup>9</sup> (Interestingly, the Inquiry was unable to pinpoint the audit trail for the decision on footpath closures).

The note of Iain Anderson's meeting with MAFF Minister Elliot Morley reveals the influence of farming interests upon MAFF at the time. Morley acknowledged the close relationship between MAFF and the farming unions and disputed the view that MAFF had been detached from the industry. The note reports his explaining that "the NFU had almost open door access - much more so than was the case with any other organisation with any other Department".<sup>10</sup>

The Countryside Agency's first public input into the FMD crisis was on 1<sup>st</sup> March when it issued a press release drawing attention to wider rural economy impacts. This foray was not welcomed by MAFF.<sup>11</sup> It was only after Sunday newspaper reports on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 20 days into the crisis, that the potential impacts on tourism and other rural businesses began to attract wider attention. Yet an agriculturally-dominated perspective continued. Even when the Joint Co-ordination Centre was established in Page Street on 26<sup>th</sup> March, the NFU were represented at the Centre but there was no representation of interests from the wider rural economy (Lessons Learned Inquiry report, 2002, p.106).

---

<sup>9</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Richard Wakeford, 22 May 2002, para.2.

<sup>10</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Elliot Morley, 8 May 2002, para.29.

<sup>11</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Richard Wakeford, 22 May 2002, para.3.(See also Lessons Learned Inquiry Report, p.64).

In the aftermath, the Permanent Secretary of MAFF/DEFRA acknowledged that the crisis did raise the question as to whether the trade off between controlling the disease and the impact on the rural economy had been adequately considered.<sup>12</sup> He later accepted that there could have been earlier inter-departmental consideration of the costs and benefits of the control strategy across the rural economy.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Role of the Rural Task Force**

By mid-March, it was becoming apparent that MAFF was not getting on top of the disease, and press and public criticism mounted. Until then, media coverage had been fairly factual and supportive of the Government's disease control efforts. However, coverage became more critical and hostile. According to Alastair Campbell, "the farming community' became a lodestone for opinion in the countryside, and any semblance of media balance was lost".<sup>14</sup> As officials struggled to cope, many mistakes and blunders were made, leading to widespread charges of heavy-handedness and much public resentment in affected rural areas. At the same time, it also became apparent that businesses dependent on tourism and visitors to the countryside were beginning to suffer badly from the movement and access restrictions in place. Indeed, their financial losses proved far greater than those incurred by the farming sector. What had started as an animal disease problem was fast becoming a rural economy crisis.

---

<sup>12</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Brian Bender et al, 26 April 2002, para.46.

<sup>13</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Brian Bender et al, 17 May 2002, para.131.

<sup>14</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Alastair Campbell, 29 April 2002, para.6.

There was clearly a strong political need to reassert the Government's authority and to redouble the eradication efforts. This was done through the Prime Minister taking personal charge of the disease control campaign in late March. Soon after, the animal cull was extended and intensified and the army was brought in to speed up the slaughter and disposal of animals.

This more concerted response by government could not quell the rising public disgust and anger at the consequences of the ruthless measures that were being taken. There was little that the Government could do to respond directly to these wider concerns in the midst of the eradication campaign. Instead, it was locked into a course of action which demanded that efforts to stamp out the disease should be pursued with the utmost vigour. Attempts to consider alternative control strategies, particularly vaccination, met with strenuous opposition from the NFU. There could really be no turning back, whatever the short-term damage to tourism interests, the rural economy, the image of the countryside and public credulity. What sustained Ministers in this stance was the promise that radical change would follow the ending of the epidemic.

Indeed, at the end of the first week of the outbreak and before the build up of criticism of the government, the Minister of Agriculture had announced a radical review of agriculture once the outbreak was over (The Times, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2001) and the Prime Minister had promised "a new deal for farming" (The Times, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2001). In the meantime, the Government had to keep various potential critics on board. It did so by setting up a Rural Task Force. The Prime Minister announced the establishment of the Task Force on 14<sup>th</sup> March following representations by Ewen Cameron, Chairman of the Countryside Agency. Its remit was:

“To consider the implications of the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease for the rural economy, both immediately and in the longer term, and to report to the Prime Minister on appropriate measures” (Rural Task Force, 2001, p.7).

Environment Minister Michael Meacher chaired the Rural Task Force, which included representatives from a range of central government departments and agencies, local and regional government, and business, tourism, conservation and other rural interests. It met weekly at first, then fortnightly. It became a forum in which to bring forward information on the scale and ramifications of the impact of the crisis, discuss short-term relief measures for affected businesses and communities, co-ordinate efforts to re-open the countryside and promote the return of visitors, and review plans for rural recovery.

Despite its title, the Task Force was not allowed to interfere with the conduct of the FMD campaign. In effect, the rural economy issues, which everyone had come to acknowledge, were “parked” for the duration. What was lacking was any overall means of integrating the conduct of the rural economy crisis and the farm crisis. Genie Turton, a senior DETR official, used a wartime metaphor to characterise the segregated approach. According to the note of her meeting with the Anderson Inquiry, “there had been some confusion between the battle and the war. COBR had direct links to the disease control front line but had not been designed to step back and take a look across all fronts”.<sup>15</sup> Arguably, this ensured no distraction or deviation from the single-minded pursuit of disease control.

---

<sup>15</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Genie Turton & Chris Dunabin (ex-DETR), 25 April 2002, para.12.

The dual approach involved more than simply segregation, however, for where conflicts arose, the disease control imperative prevailed. For example, at early meetings of the Rural Task Force, members repeatedly requested that the Government bring a veterinary specialist to explain the scientific basis of the advice that visits to the countryside be discouraged, and to help establish suitable means of risk assessment to allow footpaths and visitor attractions to be re-opened as soon as possible. The initial response from MAFF was that the vets were too busy fighting the disease to spend time in discussion with the Task Force. A second example of the disease-control imperative prevailing over other concerns was when the Prime Minister visited Cumbria. Despite the anxieties among tourism interests about media images of the disease control campaign repelling visitors, and particularly foreign visitors to the UK, it was decided that Tony Blair should be filmed and photographed wearing protective overalls emphasising the disease control and biosecurity imperative, at the expense of the concerns about rural tourism.

After mid-March, therefore, the political management of the FMD crisis at the national level involved two parallel, but largely separate, policy networks. The first one managed the disease eradication campaign. The chief organisations involved - MAFF, the State Veterinary Service and the National Farmers' Union (but not the Army) - were subject to ever more intense vilification as the number of livestock slaughtered rose relentlessly. The second network oversaw remedial measures and recovery programmes for affected rural areas. It included the Rural Task Force and other rural organisations at the local and regional

levels<sup>16</sup>. Some of them - such as the National Trust, the Countryside Agency, the National Park Authorities, the Regional Tourist Boards and the Regional Development Agencies - played an important 'delivery' role in helping to re-open the countryside or implement remedial measures. Previously they had played only a minor or peripheral role in agricultural policy. Now, with the legitimacy of what had been the core of the traditional agricultural policy network hollowed out, they came to constitute a new network for a policy field that had previously lacked coherence - rural policy.

It was clear where Ministers wanted to stand in this changing political landscape. With the number of FMD cases falling sharply in May, the Prime Minister called an election. The Labour Manifesto declared:

“Labour is committed to support our countryside and the people who live and work in it. We are committed to create a new department to lead renewal in rural areas - a Department for Rural Affairs.”

Straight after the election in June, the Prime Minister announced the creation of a new Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the abolition of MAFF. Margaret Beckett was to be the new Secretary of State. The manifesto commitment to review the position of the farming and food industries was fulfilled in August when the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food was set up.

Since the crisis, it has been widely argued by the 'rural policy network' that concerns about the wider impacts of disease control strategies should

---

<sup>16</sup> The RTF was serviced by DETR officials, with only very limited MAFF involvement. The measures to assist non-farming businesses were developed by DETR, working with DCMS, DTI and the Treasury.

have been better taken into account. Treasury officials commented to the Anderson inquiry that the misconceived dominance of agriculturally-oriented perspectives on rural economies had already been well set out in the report to the Prime Minister on rural economies by the Performance & Innovation Unit in 1999.<sup>17</sup>

## **THE INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO THE LESSON LEARNING PROCESS**

On 9<sup>th</sup> August 2001 the Government announced that three independent inquiries would examine issues related to the FMD outbreak - the lessons to be learned from the outbreak and its handling; scientific questions on disease prevention and control; and the future of the farming and food industries (see Figure 2). The first inquiry was chaired by Dr Iain Anderson and involved a secretariat of 11 staff based in the Cabinet Office and drawn from across Government. Its focus was on the Government's handling of the crisis and the institutional and policy lessons to be learned. The second inquiry, by the Royal Society, was chaired by Sir Brian Follett and involved a Committee of 15 further members with specialist scientific and industrial expertise. Its objective was to review the scientific issues relating to the prevention and control of infectious diseases in livestock and not just FMD. The third inquiry was chaired by Sir Don Curry and involved a Policy Commission of nine further prominent figures drawn from farming, the food industry, conservation and the consumer movement. Its remit was to advise the Government on measures to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of the farming and food industries.

---

<sup>17</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Richard Brown & Michael

In evidence to the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee, Margaret Beckett explained the Government's preference for three separate inquiries - a "regular mish-mash", according to one member of the committee<sup>18</sup> - rather than a single, full public inquiry. She argued that the three separate inquiries were preferable on grounds of speed, cost and quality.

"I think many of the people who say we should have a full public inquiry ... perhaps have not fully taken on board that there is a very specific legal identity for what is properly called a full public inquiry which involves very substantial amounts of time, very substantial amounts of public money, and very often people are not as satisfied with the outcome as they thought they would be when they called for a public inquiry because it takes longer than they had hoped and it is not as conclusive as they had hoped" (Oral evidence, 17 October 2001, p.11).

In addition to the three Government-instigated inquiries there have been several others. At the national level, the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (2002) held an inquiry into the outbreak, and the National Audit Office produced a detailed study (National Audit Office, 2002). Aspects of the outbreak have also been examined and reported on by the Countryside Agency, the Environment Agency, English Nature and the National Farmers' Union. The Agriculture and Rural Development Committee of the National Assembly for Wales (National Assembly for Wales, 2002) produced a report on the handling of the epidemic in Wales, and the Royal Society of Edinburgh held an inquiry into the outbreak in Scotland (2002). At the

---

Felicks, 7 May 2002, para2.17-18.

<sup>18</sup> Oral evidence, 17 October 2001, p.10.

European level, the European Parliament established a cross-party ‘Temporary Committee’ to investigate the 2001 outbreak.

At the local level, several inquiries were called by County Councils. First, in October 2001 Devon County Council held a public inquiry. Tensions that had arisen between central and local government during the outbreak seemed destined to continue to be played out. DEFRA played no part in this inquiry and would not do so in any other local inquiries.

From January 14<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Northumberland County Council held its own public inquiry into the handling of FMD, prompted by “the absence of an urgent and comprehensive Inquiry at national level” (Report of the Inquiry Panel, 2002). The inquiry’s remit was wide as it sought to deal with the scope of the disease in Northumberland, the impacts across the rural and regional economy, and the actions of all the agencies involved. The second half of the inquiry was intended to be forward thinking in order to help devise a full recovery plan. At the opening of each half day session the chairman of the inquiry stressed the absence of representatives from DEFRA and the Army - both declined to attend. The gulf between central and local perspectives became a key feature of the inquiry. Finally, an inquiry was held by the Cumbria Rural Task Force (a body run primarily by Cumbria County Council) with two sets of public sessions in May 2002 in Kendal and Carlisle. The issue of loss of trust in public bodies featured prominently. What so offended local people and groups was that at the height of the crisis officials had descended into their localities and had intruded into their lives, but now remained aloof from these efforts to come to terms with what had happened and its consequences (Bennett *et al.*, 2002).

## **THE EARLY OUTCOMES OF LESSON LEARNING**

The start of the outbreak of FMD and, with it, Ministers' suggestions that they wanted a fundamental review of agriculture once it was over, unleashed immediately a crescendo of critical comments and prescriptions. These reiterated or drew upon standard critiques of agricultural policy. Media commentators were quick to assume that FMD was another consequence of modern 'intensive farming' even though it was occurring in the most extensive livestock production systems and FMD had been recognised as an animal disease for at least four centuries. There was much debate, though, about what drove 'intensive farming' which concentrated on most of the usual suspects: the CAP, the pursuit of cheap food and the drive for profits in the food chain.

During the early weeks of the outbreak there was considerable investigative journalism revealing to the public many of the arcane practices of the livestock supply chain. Many commentators seized upon the large-scale movement of live animals as being behind the extensive spread of the disease. This touched upon concerns amongst activist groups over, for example, animal welfare and local sustainability.

Politicians and members of the public questioned the necessity of moving livestock on the scale that was revealed. MAFF estimated that two million sheep had moved about the country in the three weeks before the outbreak was discovered. Possible culprits for causing such apparently excessive movements included unscrupulous farmers and animals dealers, the complex and manipulable rules for CAP livestock payments, and the loss of local abattoirs brought about by a combination of EU hygiene

standards and supermarket-led rationalisation of supply chains. The sense that such large-scale movement of stock was not right framed the debate about alternatives.

The Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food was charged with responsibility for charting a new strategy for agriculture. The Commission was chaired by Sir Don Curry, a livestock farmer with strong co-operative agribusiness interests, and included prominent members of the environmental and consumer lobbies as well as the Chief Executive of one of the largest supermarket chains. The Commission was clearly intended to give direction to the new Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. In some respects, its membership represented DEFRA's new political establishment. Its deliberations and recommendations in effect put a seal of approval on a post-productivist consensus for agriculture. Indeed, despite the Commission's claim in its report to have produced something radically new, it was in fact the most recent in a succession of fundamental reviews (at least nine in all) of what to do about agriculture and rural policy since New Labour first came to power.<sup>19</sup> The Curry Commission drew together members and themes from these earlier reviews.

---

<sup>19</sup> Prior to the Curry Commission, previous reviews of rural and agricultural policy under the Labour Government included: the 1998 Comprehensive Spending Review; the UK Roundtable of Sustainable Development study of agricultural and rural policy (1998); the Minister of Agriculture's Agricultural Advisory Group review (1999); the Performance & Innovation Unit work on rural economies (1999); MAFF's New Strategy for Agriculture (1999); the Downing Street Summit and Action Plan for Farming (March 2000); the Rural White Paper (November 2000); and the second Comprehensive Spending Review (2000).

Three strands of policy reform are developed in the Curry report. The first is pragmatic and concerns profitability, since “no part of the vision ... will come about without profit”. The other two strands are on the environment and consumers. The overriding message is the reconnection of all of this; of farmers with their markets and the food supply chain, and of consumers with the countryside and how their food is produced.

The process of lesson-learning from FMD has lasted longer than the epidemic itself. After the Curry Commission reported in January 2002, there was a long lull whilst the reports of the other inquiries were awaited. The Royal Society’s science report was published on 16<sup>th</sup> July. The report called for improvements to contingency planning, and for consideration of emergency vaccination in any future epidemic.

July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2002 saw the publication of the report of the Lessons to be Learned Inquiry, headed by Iain Anderson. Its “first and central” recommendation is as follows:

“The Government, led by DEFRA, should develop a national strategy for animal health and disease control positioned within the framework set out in the report of the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food. This strategy should be developed in consultation and partnership with the farming industry and with representatives of the wider rural economy” (Lessons to be Learned Inquiry report, 2002, p.12).

The report presents an analysis of the course and conduct of the crisis. It focuses on the particular context and conditions that led to an epidemic of such a scale. These included the poor state of contingency planning, and the extent of animal movements. Particular attention is also paid to the

use of science, calling in the army, whether to vaccinate, and the nature of communications and lines of responsibility among those managing the response to the outbreak. Only four pages of the 165-page report are given over to the issue of footpath closure. There is little detailed discussion of the wider rural economy impacts, and much that is a reiteration of already available material from Government and from the National Audit Office. At the end of the 10-page chapter on the economic impact of FMD, the report concludes:

“The way ahead for agriculture, including animal disease control, must be seen in the context of an overall strategy for the rural economy in which the agricultural sector is but one of a number of interests. In the heat of the 2001 epidemic, policy was driven mostly by the urgent needs of the agricultural sector. In longer term planning for future contingencies, a wider range of interests must be considered” (Lessons to be Learned Inquiry report, 2002, p.139).

It recommends that:

“The interests of all sectors likely to bear the brunt of any costs should be properly represented and taken into account when designing policy options to control animal disease outbreaks” (Lessons to be Learned Inquiry report, 2002, Recommendation No. 51, p.139).

The report also recommends that the Government “make explicit the extent to which the wider effects of disease control strategies have been identified, measured and taken into account in policy decisions” (Recommendation No. 50, p.137). This came after a discussion of the human costs, in terms of stress and mental hardship, for the individuals and communities affected by the disease.

The report is not as detailed as one from a full, judicial public inquiry, particularly in its analysis of the actions of key individuals during the crisis. However, it does raise a set of questions (and contains a great deal of factual evidence) about the conduct of the crisis. When Iain Anderson appeared before the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Food & Rural Affairs the day after the report was published, he was questioned on many aspects of his Inquiry and report. The Committee was concerned about the Inquiry's apparent failure to get to the heart of the decision-making process for three key issues in the crisis: why it took 25 days to enlist the army, who decided to close the countryside, and who made the contiguous cull decision.

There was also particular interest in the Report's diagnosis of a problem with the culture of MAFF/DEFRA. Anderson had written in the foreword to his report:

“Within MAFF, and now DEFRA, I detected a culture predisposed to decision taking by committee with an associated fear of personal risk-taking. Such a climate does not encourage creative initiative. It inhibits adaptive behaviour, and organisational learning which, over time, lowers the quality of decisions taken. It seems to me that a reappraisal of prevailing attitudes and behaviours within the Department would be beneficial” (Lessons Learned Inquiry Report, 2002, p.7).

Anderson explained to the Committee that he saw a need for DEFRA to be better guided by closer contact with its 'customer group', but that it was important to recognise that this customer group was the “total rural

economy”<sup>20</sup> and not just the farming industry. He also talked of the Department needing to be “more deeply engaged in the regions”, and argued that the efforts to combat the disease worked better in Scotland in part because of better relations between central government and local bodies. The sense of dislocation between the centre and other governmental organisations in England was, according to Dr Anderson, “a constant refrain”<sup>21</sup> during his Inquiry.

The appendices to the report provide an invaluable resource for researchers, not least for the notes of who said what to the Inquiry team. For example, the note of the meeting with two key ministers, Alun Michael and Michael Meacher, sets out the key lessons that they drew from the affair. They argued that:

- The representation of tourist and business interests needed to be enhanced
- Aid to businesses should be provided more speedily and effectively. (The provision of accountancy advice had often been an effective form of support as it enabled a strategic way forward to be identified).
- Pyres should be avoided
- The blanket closures of footpaths should be avoided
- There should be a move away from confrontation and antagonism to recognising the dynamic and integrated nature of the countryside economy.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Oral evidence, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2002, Q38.

<sup>21</sup> Oral evidence, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2002, Q43.

<sup>22</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Michael Meacher and Alun Michael, 7 My 2002, para.15.

Unfortunately, the recommendations in the Lessons Learned report fail to capture most of these wider lessons highlighted by the crisis. For example, the Countryside Agency had argued that the long distances travelled by food products and livestock are not compatible with sustainable development. Recent changes in sheep movements had to be reconsidered, and coherent regional and sub-regional markets would have a wide range of economic and welfare benefits.<sup>23</sup> It is not clear that such an issue will feature among the lessons learned from the 2001 crisis.

## **CONCLUSIONS: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO THE FMD CRISIS**

A crisis such as FMD challenges fundamental assumptions by revealing underlying realities. What the FMD crisis has revealed above all is how much the countryside has changed in recent years and how out-of-date were the official and public conceptions of the position of agriculture in rural areas that prevailed in the crucial early days and weeks of the crisis. The Northumberland Committee that inquired into the 1967 FMD outbreak considered solely its impact on the agricultural sector (Committee of Inquiry on Foot and Mouth Disease, 1969). In those days, farming played a much more important role in local rural economies. Much has changed since then, with the great growth in rural tourism and leisure, in counterurbanisation, in the urban-rural shift in employment and in the diversification of farm household incomes. Yet it seems public perceptions and official outlooks had not kept pace.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Lessons Learned Inquiry cd-rom, Note of meeting with Richard Wakeford, 22 May 2002, para.12.

<sup>24</sup> Of course, other important differences between the 1967 and 2001 outbreaks were: i) the fact that the disease in 2001 had spread very widely before it was first identified; and ii) the 2001 outbreak affected more attractive and upland areas (Cumbria, North Yorkshire, Devon) where tourism was more significant than in Cheshire and Staffs.

The general public and Government have been rudely awakened to the diversity of the contemporary rural economy and agriculture's altered role within it. Leisure and tourism, manufacturing and services are now the mainstays of rural economies. However, policy and official structures have failed to reflect this change, and still largely view rural issues through an agricultural lens. In a crisis, individuals and institutions revert to type. The management of FMD as above all else an animal health problem within the livestock industry precipitated a crisis within the rural economy - a crisis which could only be dealt with at the time as an unexpected and unfortunate side-effect. The establishment of DEFRA and the concurrent shift in political rhetoric from agriculture to rural affairs ought to provide the context for the process of learning these wider lessons.

The neglect of the rural economy dimension in the formal learning process is a worrying indication that this is not yet the case, however. If it is accepted that the (mis)management of an animal disease led to a rural economy crisis, then there should be lessons to be learned about the inter-linkages and interconnectedness of farming and the wider rural economy. Yet what the three official inquiry reports have to say on these holistic questions about interconnectedness is extremely thin - banal even. The key issue of interdependence is insufficiently addressed through the official lesson-learning process. From our analysis, we would conclude with the following six lessons on the institutional response to the disease, and to the process of lesson-learning.

## **Response to the Disease and Effects**

*1) Disease control / wider rural economy interface:* It is generally acknowledged that, in the early stages of the epidemic, disease control dominated the Government's response to FMD and insufficient consideration was given to the impacts of the disease control strategy upon economic and social life in rural areas and beyond. Even after the establishment of the Rural Task Force, the management of disease control and farmer compensation, on the one hand, and wider rural recovery on the other, were conducted separately and with insufficient priority accorded to the latter.

*2) Central dictat vs local knowledge:* FMD control in England relied on central dictat which over-rode or bypassed local structures but was insensitive to local complexities and differences (e.g. in farm structure, disease dynamics and the make up of local economies). In contrast, a more collaborative and consensual approach operated within the devolved structures in Scotland. Irrespective of the relative effectiveness in disease control terms (for example, it took three months to eradicate the disease in Scotland and seven months in Northumberland), these different approaches have produced markedly different levels of controversy and discord. In England, there is a strong sense that the FMD campaign severely tested and strained central-local relations.

*3) Presidentialism vs ministerial authority:* Number Ten's take-over of the co-ordination of disease control, after 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, is generally acknowledged to have improved and accelerated disease control measures. However, it did little to mitigate the agricultural orientation of

the overall response to FMD or to join-up disease control with wider rural economy / rural recovery issues. The over-riding priority remained stamping out the disease, whatever the short-term consequences for the rural economy.

### **Response to Learning the Lessons**

4) *Constrained formal lesson learning*: The three Government-established inquiries into FMD were distinct, separate and reductive in their focus. This approach channelled the longer term lesson-learning process into fixed trajectories at the expense of dealing with linkages and synergies. In particular, the wider rural economy perspective fell between the three stools. In key respects, therefore, the national inquiry process has reproduced the partial and agriculturally-dominated perspectives that generated the wider crisis.

5) *Central / local contrasts in lesson learning*: Local, county level inquiries (in Devon, Northumberland and Cumbria) have been open, consultative, holistic and (perhaps above all) cathartic processes for those involved in, and affected by, FMD disease control. However the central state was notably absent from these inquiries. In contrast, national inquiries have been widely seen (and dismissed) as faceless, distant, obscure and conducted mainly within the corridors of power.

6) *Curry / DEFRA and the reification of farming*: The Curry Commission's focus on farming and food industries was narrow and misplaced in the light of the far-reaching consequences of FMD for wider rural economies. The content of the reform agenda that Curry has spawned is, in fact, less radical and farsighted than that already

tentatively underway in early 2001 within MAFF before FMD struck. The risk is that the re-badging of MAFF as DEFRA could actually conceal a re-consolidation of an agricultural focus.

**Figure 2 – The Three Inquiries into Foot and Mouth Disease**

Inquiry	<b>Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food</b>	<b>Scientific Review by the Royal Society</b>	<b>Inquiry into the Lessons to be Learned from the Foot and Mouth Disease Outbreak of 2001</b>
Chair	<b>Sir Don Curry</b> (Northumberland farmer and former chair of the Meat and Livestock Commission).	<b>Professor Brian Follett</b> (University of Oxford and former Vice Chancellor of the University of Warwick).	<b>Dr Iain Anderson</b> (former senior executive member of the Unilever Board and adviser to the Prime Minister on millennium compliance issues).
Membership	Nine other members, with experience of business, farming, consumer interests and environmental issues, supported by a secretariat based in the Cabinet Office.	A committee of 15 further members, comprising veterinary scientists, virologists, epidemiologists and representatives of farming and consumer groups.	Dr Anderson, supported by a small secretariat drawn from across Government and including a secondee from private industry.
Working methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings held in the English regions to discuss farming and food issues with local stakeholders.</li> <li>• Sector-specific events with stakeholders representing: the food industry; farmers; consumers; the environment; and food wholesalers and caterers.</li> <li>• Views solicited from individuals and stakeholder organisations on the issues being addressed: more than 1,000 responses were received.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee members formed sub-groups on: surveillance and diagnosis; prediction, prevention and epidemiology; and vaccination.</li> <li>• Meetings with key individuals and organisations, independent scientists and representatives of professional bodies, including Chief Veterinary Officer, Government Chief scientific Adviser, and University modelling teams.</li> <li>• Discussions with international experts and representatives of consumer and welfare groups.</li> <li>• Visits to Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway and Wales.</li> <li>• Open invitations to people to submit views and detailed evidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings with key individuals, including the Prime Minister, and organisations involved in handling the outbreak.</li> <li>• Visits to key regions affected by the outbreak to gather information at first-hand, meet stakeholders and hold open public meetings.</li> <li>• Visits to other European countries to talk to key stakeholders about how the associated outbreaks were handled.</li> <li>• Review of documents.</li> <li>• Invitation to people to submit comments</li> </ul>

Terms of Reference	<i>“To advise the Government on how we can create a sustainable, competitive and diverse farming and food sector which contributes to a thriving and sustainable rural economy, advances environmental, economic, health and animal welfare goals, and is consistent with the Government’s aims for CAP reform, enlargement of the EU and increased trade liberalisation”</i>	<i>“To review scientific questions relating to the transmission, prevention and control of epidemic outbreaks of infectious disease in livestock in Great Britain, and to make recommendations by Summer 2002”.</i>	<i>“To make recommendations for the way in which the Government should handle any future major animal disease outbreak, in the light of the lessons identified from the handling of the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak in Great Britain”.</i>
Issues investigated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What should we expect of the countryside, farming and the food sector?</li> <li>• What is good about farming and the food sector at present and what are the problems?</li> <li>• What factors are driving these good and bad aspects?</li> <li>• What can be done to make things better in the short and medium to long term?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The research base for identifying present and future risks of disease.</li> <li>• Adequacy of early warning/horizon scanning arrangements.</li> <li>• Availability, scientific efficacy and safety of current disease control technology) including vaccines).</li> <li>• Potential for enhanced use of quantitative epidemiological models in understanding and predicting the spread of disease and the impact of policy options.</li> <li>• Hazards to human health.</li> <li>• Ethical and/or financial constraints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of contingency plans.</li> <li>• Effectiveness and timeliness of the Government’s response.</li> <li>• Organisation, co-ordination and resourcing of the response.</li> <li>• Readiness of the farming industry.</li> <li>• Impact on the wider economy.</li> <li>• Vaccination (policy issues).</li> <li>• Alleviation of the economic, social and animal welfare impact.</li> <li>• Effectiveness of communication systems.</li> </ul>
Timetable	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2001: Inquiry announced 25 <sup>th</sup> September: Consultations commence 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2002: Report submitted and published	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2001: Inquiry announced 11 <sup>th</sup> October: Consultations commence 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2002: Report submitted and published	9 <sup>th</sup> August 2001: Inquiry announced 14 <sup>th</sup> December: Consultations commence 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2002: Report submitted and published

Source: Based on National Audit Office (2002, p. 118).

## References

- Anderson Inquiry (2002) *Foot and Mouth Disease 2001: Lessons to be Learned Inquiry*, HC Paper 888, London: The Stationary Office.
- Bennett, C.J. & Howlett, M. (1992) The lessons of learning – reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change, *Policy Sciences* 25(3) 275-294.
- Bennett, K., Carroll, T., Lowe, P. & Phillipson, J. (eds.) (2002) *Coping with Crisis in Cumbria: The Consequences of Foot and Mouth Disease*, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Centre for Rural Economy Research Report.
- Birkland, T.A. (1998) Focusing events, mobilization, and agenda setting, *Journal of Public Policy* 18(1) 53-74.
- Birkland, T.A. & Nath, R. (2000) Business and political dimensions in disaster management, *Journal of Public Policy* 20(3) 275-303.
- BSE Inquiry (2000) *The BSE Inquiry Report* (16 volumes), London: The Stationary Office (See also [www.bse.org.uk](http://www.bse.org.uk))
- Cohen, M., March, J. & Olsen, J. (1972) A garbage can model of organizational choice, *Administrative Science Quarterly* (17) 1-25.
- Committee of Inquiry on Foot and Mouth Disease (the ‘Northumberland Committee’) (1969) *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Foot and Mouth Disease, 1968*, London: HMSO,
- Countryside Agency (2001) *Foot and Mouth Disease: The State of the Countryside*, CAX 63, Cheltenham: Countryside Agency.
- Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2002) *Origin of the UK Foot and Mouth Disease Epidemic in 2001*, June 2002, London: DEFRA.
- Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions & Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (2000) *Our Countryside – The Future*, London: DETR & MAFF.
- Dowding, K. (1995) Model or metaphor? A critical review of the policy network approach, *Political Studies* 43, 136-58.
- House of Commons Agriculture Committee (1989) *Salmonella in Eggs* HC Paper 108, London: Stationary Office.
- House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (2002) *The Impact of Foot and Mouth Disease* HC Paper 363, London: Stationary Office.

- House of Commons Committee on Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2002) *The Impact of Foot and Mouth Disease: Government's Interim Reply to the Committee's First Report of Session 2001-02*, Special Report, HC 856, London: Stationary Office.
- Kingdon, J.W. (1995) *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policy*, New York: HarperCollins.
- Minister of Agriculture's Agricultural Advisory Group (1999) *Europe's Agriculture: The Case for Change* London: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1999) *A New Direction for Agriculture: A Consultation Document* London: MAFF.
- National Audit Office (2002) *The 2001 Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease*, HC 939, Session 2001-2002, London: The Stationary Office.
- Nerlich, B., Hamilton, C and Rowe, V. (2002) Conceptualising Foot and Mouth Disease: The Socio-Cultural Role of Metaphors, Frames and Narratives, *Metaphorik.de* 02/2002 (Electronic Journal: <http://www.metaphorik.de>)
- Number 10 Downing Street (2000) *Action Plan for Farming*, (<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/default.asp?PageID=1428>).
- Performance and Innovation Unit (1999) *Rural Economies*, London: The Stationary Office.
- Policy Commission on the Future of Food and Farming (2002) *Farming and Food: A Sustainable Future*, London: Cabinet Office.
- Royal Society (2002) *Infectious Diseases in Livestock*, Policy Document 15/02, London: The Royal Society.
- Rural Task Force (2001) *Tackling the Impacts of Foot and Mouth Disease on the Rural Economy*, London: Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- Sabatier, P.A. (1993) Policy change over a decade or more, in Sabatier, P.A. & Jenkins-Smith, H.C. (eds) *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach*, Oxford: Westview Press.
- Sabatier, P.A. & Jenkins-Smith, H.C. (eds) (1993) *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach*, Oxford: Westview Press.
- UK Round Table on Sustainable Development (1998) *Aspects of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Policy*, London: UK Round Table on Sustainable Development.