



Bio-Security Module BSM00:

INTRODUCTION TO BIO-SECURITY MODULES

(Version 3.3: February 2012)

OBJECTIVE

To set out the objectives and structure of the Bio-Security Modules (BSM) as developed under the auspices of the South African Ostrich Business Chamber and to clarify their relationship to the Animal Diseases Act, Act No 35 of 1984 and the latest Veterinary Procedural Notice VPN04.

BACKGROUND

The primary documents that set out the requirements with regard to bio-security in the ostrich industry are the following:

- Ostrich Protocol – Edition 01
- VPN/04: Standard for the requirements, registration, maintenance of registration and official control of export approved ostrich farms
- EU Regulations and Directives, in particular, Commission Regulation 798/2008

The first two documents have their legal basis in the Animal Diseases Act (Act 35 of 1984).

PRINCIPLES

The South African Ostrich Business Chamber (SAOBC) established a Bio-Security Committee in 2011 to develop a set of comprehensive bio-security measures, aimed at complementing and expanding on VPN04 in order to set clear guidelines for bio-security measures that should be implemented for the ostrich industry. Key principles that have emerged from this process are the following:

1. VPN04 should be the primary legal document that defines the desired **outcomes and objectives** with regards to bio-security (and other control measures) for the ostrich industry.
2. The full series of Bio-Security Modules (BSMs) being developed by the SAOBC should provide the **technical detail** on how the desired outcomes and objectives set out in VPN04 should be achieved.
3. These BSMs will be **comprehensive and practical** and will be as strict or stricter than the detail set out in VPN04 and will be developed under the auspices of the SAOBC Bio-Security Committee and will then also be circulated for comment and approval by DAFF and the provincial veterinary authorities.
4. BSMs will be updated and improved as and when required in compliance with the principle of **continuous improvement** and to ensure that any identified gaps in the detailed control measures are addressed and that any deficiencies in the BSMs are rectified. Regular updating of BSMs is easier than regular updating of VPN04 and this is why the details of the control measures should be contained in the BSMs rather than

the VPN04. Any updates of any BSMs will only become enforceable when they have been approved by The Director: Animal Health, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa.

5. The **consequences of non-compliance** with the BSMs will be defined in VPN04 and/or in the BSMs.
6. Failure to comply with the BSMs and VPN04 is seen as a serious threat to the sustainability of the ostrich industry in South Africa and the SAOBC therefore fully endorses and supports **strict implementation** of the BSMs, auditing of compliance with the BSMs and strict enforcement of agreed sanctions (as will be set out in VPN04) against ostrich producers and officials that do not comply with the BSMs.
7. The BSMs should be **applied to all sectors of the ostrich production cycle** (from breeder birds, through egg production, hatcheries, chick rearing, growers through to slaughter) and not only on the end product farm (EU export registered farms) as key risk features are found in the early portions of the production cycle not covered by VPN04.
8. A **risk assessment and classification** system for ostrich production systems should be developed and should be incorporated into the BSMs with incentives for farmers to modify their operations to lower risk levels and penalties for farmers that continue to operate high risk production systems.

STRUCTURE OF THE BSMs

In order to ensure that the improvement of bio-security within the ostrich industry happens in an orderly and structured manner, focusing on priority issues first, it has been decided to adopt a modular approach to the development of the BSMs. Each BSM will cover a specific technical topic and will be completed and implemented in a phased manner. As each new BSM is developed, the appropriate forms associated with that BSM will also be developed and the BSMs associated with audit functions will be updated to incorporate each additional BSM as it is implemented. Where necessary, VPN04 will then also be updated to incorporate additional sanctions specific to the new BSM in question.

As a first step, the following list of BSMs have been identified (these will be modified as and when required):

- BSM01: Registration and classification of farm and infrastructure requirements
- BSM02: Record keeping requirements
- BSM03: Identification of individual ostriches
- BSM04: Movement of eggs and day-old chicks

- BSM05: Movement of ostriches from one registered farm to another registered farm
- BSM06: Movement of ostriches from a registered farm to a registered abattoir
- BSM07: Movement of ostriches across or along a public road
- BSM08: Registration as an export ostrich farm
- BSM09: Transport of ostrich products and identification of vehicles
- BSM10: Ostrich drinking water treatment
- BSM11: Ostrich drinking water monitoring
- BSM12: Vehicle disinfection
- BSM13: Feed troughs and feed delivery systems
- BSM14: Feed quality monitoring
- BSM15: Ostrich mortality and disposal of dead ostriches
- BSM16: Access control and movement of personnel and vehicles between farm epidemiological units
- BSM17: Special considerations for ostriches raised on pastures
- BSM18: Special considerations for ostriches raised in feedlots
- BSM19: Pollution control from ostrich farms
- BSM20: Chemical Residue Controls
- BSM21: Audit of critical issues
- BSM22: Audit functions of external auditors
- BSM23: Risk assessment and classification of ostrich production systems
- BSM24: Compensation for destroyed ostriches
- BSM25: Bio-security at ostrich hatcheries

While it is recognized that all the BSMs are important in order to achieve an integrated, comprehensive and coherent bio-security system on ostrich farms, the recent Avian Influenza outbreak and the findings deriving therefrom make it clear that there are a number of priority BSMs that require urgent and immediate development and implementation. The rationale behind this prioritization is based on the following understanding:

- The initial source of the AI virus (except in endemic areas) is most probably wild water fowl that gain access to ostrich farms and are able to pass active viruses into water supplies, feed supplies and/or tracts of land where ostriches are kept. While the excretion and deposition of the virus by the water fowl carriers is difficult to control, the transfer into ostriches on any given farm can be addressed and/or mitigated by the application of appropriate bio-security measures to the water supplies, feed supplies and movement of personnel and vehicles within the farm.
- The primary vector for the transfer of active viruses between ostrich populations on different farms is through the movement of infected ostriches as well as the movement of vehicles and personnel between farms. This transfer vector can be addressed and/or mitigated by the application of appropriate bio-security measures to the movement of vehicles and personnel between farms and, most importantly, by strict controls on the movement of ostriches between farms.

Based on the above, the following BSMs have been identified as the priority BSMs that require immediate implementation:

- BSM01: Registration and classification of farm and infrastructure requirements
- BSM05: Movement of ostriches from one registered farm to another registered farm
- BSM10: Ostrich drinking water treatment
- BSM11: Ostrich drinking water monitoring
- BSM21: Audit of critical issues

It is believed that strict and immediate implementation of these priority BSMs will address at least 80% of the bio-security problem. As soon as these have been developed, finalized and are undergoing implementation, work will commence to develop the additional remaining BSMs in accordance with an agreed priority ranking system.

Training and assisted implementation of the above 5 priority BSMs commenced at the end of 2011 with full implementation (with sanctions) envisaged in early 2012. It is envisaged that the second set of second priority BSMs will be developed and implemented during 2012 and that the complete set of BSMs will be developed and implemented during 2013.