UK veterinary antibiotics sales among lowest levels recorded in Europe

UK sales of antibiotics in food-producing animals have halved since 2014, the UK-Veterinary Antibiotic Resistance and Sales Surveillance (UK-VARSS) annual report, published today (Wednesday 18 November), has revealed.

The report shows that while sales of antibiotics increased slightly by 1.5 mg/kg to 31.0 mg/kg in comparison to the previous year, this was off-set by a reduction in use of the more potent critical antibiotics. UK veterinary antibiotic use in 2019 was the second lowest since the start of regular reporting, and the UK has one of the lowest levels in Europe.

Reducing unnecessary use of antibiotics in animals, especially Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs) – which are vitally important for human medicine – is key to reducing antibiotic resistance (AMR) and protecting the most critical antibiotics in human health. However, using them responsibly is crucial and necessary for the treatment of disease.

Between 2018 and 2019 there was a 21% drop in of use of HP-CIAs in food-producing animals, which account for 0.5% of total antibiotic sales. The UK has also seen an overall reduction in the level of resistance in E. coli from healthy pigs at slaughter since 2015 and resistance to HP-CIAs in E. coli is at very low levels.

AMR occurs when micro-organisms that cause infection change over time and no longer respond to medicines, making infections harder to treat and increasing the risk of disease spread. The World Health Organization has declared that AMR is one of the top 10 global public health threats facing humanity.

Over the past 5 years the success of the UK's significant reduction of antibiotic usage in animals has been achieved through collaboration between the government, vets and farmers.

A key example of this has been the Targets Task Force, a collection of specialised vets, chaired by the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture alliance (RUMA) which aims to promote high standards of food safety, animal health and responsible use of medicine in farm animals.

> **Peter Borriello, Chief Executive Veterinary Medicines Directorate said:**
>
> In the last five years we have worked closely with the farming industry and veterinary profession to achieve huge reductions in use of antibiotics in animals.
>
> This demonstrates how farmers and vets have been working together to use antibiotics responsibly while safeguarding the health and

> welfare of our livestock.
>
> The UK Government will continue to work with industry to focus on infection control, reducing the need to use antibiotics to treat disease and maintain the UK's world leading standards in animal welfare.

Christine Middlemiss, the UK's Chief Veterinary Officer said:

> I am delighted that the UK continues to lead the way as one of the lowest users of antibiotics in livestock across Europe.
>
> These findings are testament to the hard work of the UK's farmers and vets to use antibiotics responsibly in order to tackle antibiotic resistance and protect our most critically important antibiotics in human health, while also reducing the burden of disease in animals.

The recently published 10th European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption report which, using 2018 data, revealed that the UK continues to have one of the lowest levels of veterinary antibiotic sales in Europe

The UK's voluntary approach to collecting antibiotic use data and target setting, is an example of government, industry, and veterinary professionals working collectively to achieve effective antibiotic stewardship.

The government welcomes RUMA's new Targets Task Force report also published today, which sets out new sector-specific targets for the UK livestock industry 2021-2024.

Further information:

- UK Veterinary Antibiotic Resistance and Sales Surveillance (UK-VARSS) report is published annually by Defra's Veterinary Medicines Directorate. The report provides previous years' data on the quantity of authorised antibiotics for use in animals (primarily livestock) sold in the UK, and results from surveillance programmes looking at antibiotic resistance in bacteria from animals.

Report 13/2020: Collision and derailment at Neville Hill

Press release

RAIB has today released its report into the collision and derailment at Neville Hill, 13 November 2019.

The class 800 train (left) and HST set (right) involved in the accident (images courtesy of Network Rail)

Summary

At 21:41 hrs on 13 November 2019, an empty LNER Intercity Express Train, approaching the maintenance depot at Neville Hill in Leeds, caught up and collided with the rear of a LNER High Speed Train moving into the depot. The leading train was travelling at around 5 mph (8 km/h) and the colliding train at around 15 mph (24 km/h). No one was injured in the accident, but the trailing bogie of the second and third vehicles and the trailing wheelset of the fourth vehicle of the Intercity Express Train derailed to the right, by up to 1.25 metres.

The collision occurred because the driver of the Intercity Express Train was focused on reinstating an on-board system which he had recently isolated, instead of focusing on the driving task. This was exacerbated by him unintentionally commanding too much acceleration due to his lack of familiarity with the train.

The driver had isolated the on-board system at Leeds station because he had been unable to correctly set up the train management system. He had been unable to do this because ambiguous documentation from Hitachi, the train manufacturer, had led to LNER misunderstanding the required process for setting up the train management system when developing the content of its driver training programme.

The driver’s lack of adequate familiarity with the train probably arose because LNER had not recognised that his training needs were greater than for his peers.

The derailment occurred because the design of the Intercity Express Train is susceptible to derailment in low speed collisions. This susceptibility is related to the use of high-strength couplers with large freedoms of movement in pitch and yaw. These features were part of the train’s design. However, the impact of these features on the train’s resistance to derailment and lateral displacement in low speed collisions, was not considered by the

train’s designers.

The crashworthiness standard used to design the Intercity Express Train did not specifically require consideration of the likelihood of derailment during collisions at lower than the 22.5 mph (36 km/h) specified design speed, nor did it include specific criteria for assessing the derailment performance. As such, the assessment and validation of the design did not identify any issues with these design features.

Recommendations

RAIB has made five recommendations. Two recommendations are addressed to LNER and relate to correcting its understanding of the setup of the train management system and ensuring that the documentation provided by Hitachi has not led to any other safety issues. The other recommendations relate to:

- Hitachi to revisit the assessment of the design of the Intercity Express Train against the requirements of the crashworthiness standard
- LNER to assess the risk of a derailment of an Intercity Express Train involved in a low speed collision
- RSSB to consider whether it is appropriate for the crashworthiness standard to be modified.

Notes to editors

1. The sole purpose of RAIB investigations is to prevent future accidents and incidents and improve railway safety. RAIB does not establish blame, liability or carry out prosecutions.
2. RAIB operates, as far as possible, in an open and transparent manner. While our investigations are completely independent of the railway industry, we do maintain close liaison with railway companies and if we discover matters that may affect the safety of the railway, we make sure that information about them is circulated to the right people as soon as possible, and certainly long before publication of our final report.
3. For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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Ports across England to receive £10 million to support Brexit transition

- Major port areas to receive a share of £10 million for transition planning
- Money will help the local area to prepare for the end of the transition period.

Councils across England will receive a share of £10 million to support their preparations for the end of the transition period, Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick has announced (Monday 16 November).

The fund will help councils prepare for changes at the border, bolstering local plans to ensure operations can continue to run smoothly at the end of the transition period.

For example, Kent County Council will receive £1.7 million to help with preparations for Operation Brock, the planned traffic management system for ports including Dover and Folkestone. The funding will be used to ensure traffic at the port and in the surrounding areas can move easily, preventing delays to freight and other vital local services.

In addition, Hull City Council which has a high impact Roll-on Roll-off port will receive funding to help respond to any localised disruption. Other areas such as Doncaster will receive additional funding to support local priorities and employ specialist staff to help with their transition planning and reporting to ensure they can continue to deliver vital services.

This share of the additional £10 million comes on top of £704 million government investment into our borders, including £470 million for port infrastructure.

We continue to engage with local areas on what support they may need to ensure an orderly end to the transition period.

The money is an unringfenced allocation covering spend in 2020 to 2021.

Full allocations:

- Ashford Borough Council – £1 million
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council – £86,000
- Bristol City Council – £86,000
- Cheshire West and Chester Council – £86,000
- Dartford Borough Council – £500,000
- Doncaster Council – £86,000
- Dover District Council – £500,000
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council – £86,000
- East Suffolk District Council – £150,000
- East Sussex County Council – £86,000
- Epping District Council – £500,000
- Essex County Council – £150,000
- Folkestone and Hythe District Council – £150,000
- Great Yarmouth Borough Council – £86,000
- Hampshire County Council – £150,000
- Hull City Council – £150,000
- Ipswich City Council – £86,000
- Kent County Council/Kent Relief Forum – £1.7 million
- Lancashire County Council – £150,000
- Lancaster City Council – £150,000
- Medway Unitary Authority – £150,000
- North East Lincolnshire Council – £150,000
- North Lincolnshire Council – £150,000
- North Tyneside Council – £86,000
- Plymouth City Council – £86,000
- Portsmouth City Council – £150,000
- Redcar and Cleveland Unitary Authority – £150,000
- Sefton Council – £150,000
- Solihull Metro Borough Council – £800,000
- South Holland District Council – £86,000
- Southampton City Council – £150,000
- Tendring District Council – £150,000
- Thanet District Council – £500,000
- Thurrock Council – £500,000
- Warrington Borough Council – £800,000

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New support for UK space hubs unveiled

Each area, dubbed a ‘space hub’, will use government funding to bring together local authorities, expertise and businesses to create a strategy for how their area can take maximum advantage of the commercial space race. Harwell in Oxfordshire established itself as a space hub in the last 10 years, and ministers want to replicate this success in other areas.

Funding is going to seven locations – including the North West, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire – to ensure space is a priority for regional economic growth and attract commercial investment from space companies to these areas.

In the last decade, space has transformed into one of the UK’s fastest growing and most venerable sectors. Trebling in size since 2010, at the last count the UK space industry now employs close to 42,000 people in all corners of the country and generates an income of nearly £15 billion every year.

The government is committed to making space a sector that thrives beyond the ‘Golden Triangle’ of London, Cambridge and Oxford, and contributes jobs and growth to regions across the whole of the UK. This approach is reinforced by support for seven potential spaceport locations in areas across Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

> The UK’s space sector has shown incredible resilience to the coronavirus pandemic and will continue to play a key role in our recovery – from creating high-quality jobs to finding unique ways to support our NHS.
>
> This funding will arm local leaders up and down the UK with the tools they need to put their local areas at the front of the commercial space race, while refuelling the tank of the UK economy and helping Britain realise its ambitions as a global space superpower.

The six-month projects will see local government, experts and business leaders come together to find out how their area can take advantage of the opportunities of the commercial space age. Each location will use the money to assess their current space capabilities and develop action plans for how they can accelerate the growth of their local space hub.

Dr Colin Baldwin, Head of Local Growth Strategy at the UK Space Agency said:

> Space has gone from a nice-to-have sector to a heavyweight industry in the UK over the past decade – trebling in size and now employing over 42,000 people.

> We know that space will help put fuel back in the tank of the economy as it recovers from the pandemic and are determined this growth will be felt in all corners of the country.

Space hubs will be led by a consortium of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), combined authorities, academic institutions, research groups and businesses, to look at current strengths and set a strategy for how to grow the space sector in their area.

The UK Space Agency will also support Space Leadership Forums in each region, bringing together local government, business leaders and academia into a representative body that can drive forward this work and champion the sector.

Receiving funding are:

- Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), which will lead a project focused on North-West England
- West of England Combined Authority (WECA), which covers Bristol, Bath and North-East Somerset and South Gloucestershire
- City-REDI of the University of Birmingham
- University of Leeds and Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) working across West Yorkshire
- Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, which will cover Surrey and Hampshire
- Welsh Government, which will carry out activities across the whole of Wales
- AstroAgency on behalf of the Scottish Space Leadership Council, which will look across all of Scotland

In addition to funding for seven areas in this round, money went to Northern Ireland earlier this year, where a project is being led by Invest Northern Ireland to carry out analysis of its local space sector, to work out where investment would be best directed, continuing the important, collaborative partnership between the UK Space Agency and the Devolved Administrations.

The aerospace industry, which has been dramatically impacted by COVID-19, is an important part of the regional economies of many parts of the UK. This funding will help certain localities explore opportunities to use existing industrial strengths to support the space sector.

New money is just one element of an expanded programme of regional activity which the UK Space Agency will be setting out in the coming months, that will be delivered alongside key partners such as the Satellite Applications Catapult, as part of its commitment to help re-balance the economy and support new high-skilled jobs and careers in space across the country.

Prime Minister's article in the Financial Times: 18 November 2020

Slowly but surely humanity is taking the upper hand in the fight against the virus. We have not won yet. There are still hard weeks and months to come. But with better drugs, testing and a range of vaccines, we know in our hearts that next year we will succeed.

We will use science to rout the virus, and we must use the same extraordinary powers of invention to repair the economic damage from Covid-19, and to build back better.

Now is the time to plan for a green recovery with high-skilled jobs that give people the satisfaction of knowing they are helping make the country cleaner, greener and more beautiful.

Imagine Britain, when a Green Industrial Revolution has helped to level up the country. You cook breakfast using hydrogen power before getting in your electric car, having charged it overnight from batteries made in the Midlands. Around you the air is cleaner; trucks, trains, ships and planes run on hydrogen or synthetic fuel.

British towns and regions – Teeside, Port Talbot, Merseyside and Mansfield – are now synonymous with green technology and jobs. This is where Britain's ability to make hydrogen and capture carbon pioneered the decarbonisation of transport, industry and power.

My 10 point plan to get there will mobilise £12bn of government investment, and potentially three times as much from the private sector, to create and support up to 250,000 green jobs.

There will be electric vehicle technicians in the Midlands, construction and installation workers in the North East and Wales, specialists in advanced fuels in the North West, agroforestry practitioners in Scotland, and grid system installers everywhere. And we will help people train for these new green jobs through our Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

This 10 point plan will turn the UK into the world's number one centre for green technology and finance, creating the foundations for decades of economic growth.

One – we will make the UK the Saudi Arabia of wind with enough offshore capacity to power every home by 2030.

Two – we will turn water into energy with up to £500m of investment in hydrogen.

Three – we will take forward our plans for new nuclear power, from large scale to small and advanced modular reactors.

Four – we'll invest more than £2.8bn in electric vehicles, lacing the land with charging points and creating long-lasting batteries in UK gigafactories. This will allow us to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans in 2030. However, we will allow the sale of hybrid cars and vans that can drive a significant distance with no carbon coming out of the tailpipe until 2035.

Five – we will have cleaner public transport, including thousands of green buses and hundreds of miles of new cycle lanes.

Six – we will strive to repeat the feat of Jack Alcock and Teddie Brown, who achieved the first nonstop transatlantic flight a century ago, with a zero emission plane. And we will do the same with ships.

Seven – we will invest £1bn next year to make homes, schools and hospitals greener, and energy bills lower.

Eight – we will establish a new world-leading industry in carbon capture and storage, backed by £1bn of government investment for clusters across the North, Wales and Scotland.

Nine – we will harness nature's ability to absorb carbon by planting 30,000 hectares of trees every year by 2025 and rewilding 30,000 football pitches worth of countryside.

And ten, our £1bn energy innovation fund will help commercialise new low-carbon technologies, like the world's first liquid air battery being developed in Trafford, and we will make the City of London the global centre for green finance through our sovereign bond, carbon offsets markets and disclosure requirements.

This plan can be a global template for delivering net zero emissions in ways that creates jobs and preserve our lifestyles.

On Wednesday I will meet UK businesses to discuss their contribution. We plan to provide clear timetables for the clean energy we will procure, details of the regulations we will change, and the carbon prices that we will put on emissions.

I will establish Task Force Net Zero committed to reaching net zero by 2050, and through next year's COP26 summit we will urge countries and companies around the world to join us in delivering net zero globally.

Green and growth can go hand-in-hand. So let us meet the most enduring threat to our planet with one of the most innovative and ambitious programmes of

job-creation we have known.