

Rob Gibson MSP

Convenor of the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee

c/o Clerk to the Committee

Room T3.40

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP



23 November 2015

Dear Rob

SRUC PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO THE NETWORK OF VETERINARY DISEASE SURVEILLANCE CENTRES

Further to my letter of 22 October, I would like to update you on SRUC's proposals for changes to the network of veterinary disease surveillance centres (DSC) which were discussed with the Scottish Government Strategic Management Board for Veterinary Surveillance (SMB) on 13 November.

Having further considered the responses to their consultation, and in response to the concerns expressed, the SRUC have decided to establish a new post-mortem facility in the Inverness area to replace the existing facility. Veterinary staff, including the Marine Mammal Strandings Team, will remain in the current site and will relocate to the new facility once it is completed. SRUC are currently assessing several sites in and around Inverness to develop this facility, and I expect to have a further update on this around the turn of the year.

The SMB have reported to me that they are satisfied that SRUC's plans for veterinary surveillance in the Inverness area will allow services to continue to operate at the current standards. However, in terms of the wider impact of SRUC's proposals, SRUC themselves would be best placed to provide an update to you when they present evidence to the RACCE on 25 November.

I will, of course, continue to monitor the situation closely and, as ever, would welcome any comments from the Committee.

RICHARD LOCHHEAD