


# Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) <a href="#">1998/2220(COS)</a>	Procedure completed
Bovine spongiform encephalopathy BSE. 1998 2nd biannual report	
Subject 3.10.08.05 Animal diseases 4.60.04.04 Food safety	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	PSE <a href="#">ROTH-BEHRENDT Dagmar</a>	26/11/1997
		PPE <a href="#">BÖGE Reimer</a>	26/11/1997
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Health	<a href="#">2131</a>	12/11/1998

Key events			
12/11/1998	Debate in Council	<a href="#">2131</a>	
18/11/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1998)0598	Summary
11/01/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/02/1999	Vote in committee		Summary
18/02/1999	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A4-0083/1999</a>	
14/04/1999	Debate in Parliament		
15/04/1999	Decision by Parliament	T4-0329/1999	Summary
15/04/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/07/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1998/2220(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)

Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/4/10576

### Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1998)0598	18/11/1998	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	<a href="#">A4-0083/1999</a> <a href="#">OJ C 175 21.06.1999, p. 0005</a>	18/02/1999	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0329/1999 <a href="#">OJ C 219 30.07.1999, p. 0370-0433</a>	15/04/1999	EP	Summary

## Bovine spongiform encephalopathy BSE. 1998 2nd biannual report

**PURPOSE :** Second Bi-annual BSE Follow-up Report in the form of a Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. **CONTENT :** This is the second six-monthly report presented by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers on progress made in the implementation of the follow up of recommendations on BSE. The first report, which was presented in May 1998, provided a broad overview of practical measures taken to combat BSE and to implement the new approach in the fields of scientific advice, risk analysis, risk management, control and inspection. This second report shows that a large part of the work has been completed. A synopsis of this is provided in Annex 1. Desired progress, however, has not been achieved on a few points such as the EU becoming a full member of the WHO and the International Office of Epizootics. The following points should be noted : - despite the Commission's efforts, the Council has still not agreed a common approach to removing 'specific risk material' from the food and feed chain; - some Member States have been slow in implementing Community law concerning the control of BSE; - the Commission has been pushing ahead with work on validating a post-mortem BSE test. Shortly, the validation results will show whether the EU currently has a test that can reduce consumer risk; - the introduction of new structures for the Scientific Committees and checks carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office have yielded important information on current working methods. This will be carefully evaluated; - the importance of effective follow-up of scientific recommendations and inspection visits has been demonstrated over the past year; - an important issue to be agreed at international level is how to implement the precautionary principle within the context of a scientifically based consumer-protection policy. In addition, the judgment of equivalence is the subject of discussion at international level, in particular in the Codex Alimentarius. These issues will need to be taken into consideration by the Commission in the draft negotiation mandate to be given by the Council for the forthcoming WTO discussions on the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) Agreement; - the EP's and Commission's joint conference on food safety will provide an opportunity to take stock of past progress and future challenges from a variety of angles; - the Commission is to push ahead with its response to the debate on the Green Paper on Food Law; - the Commission intends to take up a number of points in its 1999-2001 consumer protection action plan. Article 152 of the Amsterdam Treaty gives more impact to Community action in the field of health protection.?

## Bovine spongiform encephalopathy BSE. 1998 2nd biannual report

The Agriculture and Environment Committees have issued a stark warning that the BSE crisis is not over and a further spread of new-variant CJD cannot be ruled out. Rapporteurs Reimer BÖGE (EPP, D) and Dagmar ROTH-BEHRENDT (PES, D) are sharply critical of the Member States and voice some criticism of the Commission in their joint resolution on the Commission's second half-yearly BSE follow-up report, which was adopted unanimously by the committees. While MEPs are pleased with the Commission's progress in implementing a number of its recommendations for eradicating BSE, they point to the "catastrophic picture" of the failure by 13 Member States to implement BSE-related Community measures which is revealed by the legal proceedings brought against them by the Commission and they cite "negligence and omissions in the policy on combatting BSE". MEPs are "extremely concerned at the sharp rise in cases of BSE in Portugal", which prompted the Commission to ban exports of live cattle, meat-and-bone meal and beef and veal from Portugal in November 1998, and demand that those responsible for illegal exports of British beef are prosecuted. They also condemn the "totally unacceptable conduct of Member States" in refusing to cooperate with the Commission by providing information on the numbers of food and veterinary inspectors they have. The Agriculture and Environment Committees are demanding a proper legislative role for the EP in agriculture under the codecision procedure, instead of its present consultative role, and the power to censure individual Commissioners and they insist that preventive health and consumer protection must be given top priority in all the measures taken to tackle BSE. The two committees advocate the radical approach of removing complete herds from the food chain in order to eradicate the disease. They press the Commission to complete its work on diagnostic tests for BSE in bovines without delay. They also call for a ban on the general use of antibiotics in feedingstuffs as growth promoters and insist that they should only be administered on veterinary prescription. The MEPs' criticisms of the Commission centre on its poor personnel management which, they say, has left vacancies in the Agriculture Directorate-General unfilled, and on its lack of accountability to the EP. Its private offices, in particular, should made more accountable. However, the creation of a scientific steering committee under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for consumer protection is a welcome step forward. ?

## Bovine spongiform encephalopathy BSE. 1998 2nd biannual report

The Parliament adopted a resolution, drafted by Mr. Reimer Böge (D, EPP) and Ms. Dagmar Roth-Behrendt (D, PES), calling for the comprehensive application of testing procedures throughout the EU. The resolution expresses Parliament's disappointment with respect to the fact that 13 Member States face legal proceedings following failures to comply with EU regulations introduced to improve controls. The resolution also takes up the situation of compensation claims in the UK and the need to settle this issue. One amendment expresses concern at the slow decline in BSE cases in the UK and calls on the Commission to investigate, while another takes the view that the increase in new CJD cases merits the compulsory notification of such cases in all Member States and the introduction of a European register.?