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Government of Flanders  
ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

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**Animal welfare; measures in the context of fires in animal housing facilities**  
**Your e-mail dated 5 July 2019**

Dear

Thank you for your E-Mail of 5 July 2019 that has been forwarded to me. I wish to reply to your questions regarding measures in Germany concerning stable fires as follows:

According to the German Animal Welfare – Farm Animal Husbandry Ordinance (*Tierschutz-Nutztierhaltungsverordnung*, <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/tierschnutztv/>), animal housing facilities shall be designed in their construction, the materials used and their condition so that injury or other risks to the animals' health are ruled out as far as the current technology allows. In addition, equipment shall be operated properly, and comprehensive precautionary measures shall be taken. Assessment of compliance with the requirements is the responsibility of the *Laender* (German federal states) authorities.

There are no national guidelines on fire protection in animal housing facilities. This situation is sometimes controversially discussed at state and federal level: on the occasion of the Conference of Agricultural Ministers in spring 2018, the working group on animal welfare of the *Laender* Working Group for Consumer Protection (*Länderarbeitsgemeinschaft Verbraucherschutz*, LAV) evaluated whether there is a need for action in this respect. As a result, the authorities of the *Laender* see a need for action for regulations on "safety precautions to avoid animal losses in livestock farms in the event of technical malfunctions or fire". The German Animal Welfare Act (*Tierschutzgesetz*, <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/tierschg/>) provides for a delegation of authority, according to which the Federal Ministry may adopt provisions concerning the requirements to be met by safety regulations. From the *Laender* point of view, there is a need for such regulations. However, the need for more far-reaching

regulations must first be justified by the *Laender*. To date, documents to this effect have not been made available to the Federal Ministry.

At *Laender* level, fire protection requirements (e.g. fire barriers, escape and rescue routes, fire resistance of building components) are regulated in the building regulation of the respective *Land*. According to the model building regulation – which was drawn up as a template for the building regulations of the *Laender* – building structures are to be arranged, erected, modified and maintained in such a way that the outbreak of fire and the spread of fire and smoke is prevented. Nationwide, the principle is that it is possible to rescue people and animals and carry out effective fire-fighting operations in the event of a fire. When approving animal installations, as a rule, the authorising authorities request expert opinions on fire protection.

In 2010, the Association for Technology and Structures in Agriculture (*Kuratorium für Technik und Bauwesen in der Landwirtschaft*, KTBL) issued relevant recommendations (KTBL issue 91: Vorbeugender Brandschutz beim landwirtschaftlichen Bauen; Darmstadt, 2010, 48 pages, 9 euros, ISBN 978-3-941583-44-3, purchase order number 40091). Please find a reading sample at <https://www.ktbl.de/fileadmin/produkte/leseprobe/40091excerpt.pdf>.

If it has been possible to lead the animals out of the housing facility into the open air, a suitable place for temporary accommodation should be provided for the animals brought to safety so that rescue workers and, if necessary, road users on nearby traffic routes are not endangered by free-roaming animals. This accommodation area should be located outside of the installation and operating areas of the fire brigade and secured by a fence, for instance.

In addition, there are also expert recommendations, guidelines and planning aids, e.g. by the fire brigades, which can be accessed at [https://www.vdf-nrw.de/uploads/tx\\_bitloftvdfnrwdownload/2015-03-23\\_Fachempfehlung\\_Brandschutz\\_Stallanlagen.pdf](https://www.vdf-nrw.de/uploads/tx_bitloftvdfnrwdownload/2015-03-23_Fachempfehlung_Brandschutz_Stallanlagen.pdf)

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of

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