To whom it may concern,

I am writing in response to your request for corroboration for the claims made in the REF2014 impact case study entitled “Control of bovine viral diarrhoea virus in livestock”.

Bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) is an important disease of cattle that causes considerable losses to the industry by causing reproductive failure and predisposing animals to other infections. The cattle industry in Scotland is valuable and significant for the rural economy, the food and drink industry, and exports.

Implementation of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy in Scotland over the last 9 years has focussed on a set of priority diseases. SRUC’s work was important in the establishment of disease priorities for Scottish farmers through provision of evidence. BVD, in particular was identified by industry, and by veterinary scientists and Government in Scotland as a high priority, in terms of its economic and welfare impact.

SRUC’s undertook a Scottish Government commissioned prevalence study of BVD that accurately established the scale of the problem we had to tackle in both dairy and beef sectors in Scotland. This, together with their work in developing and implementing the CHeCS system to establish control options at farm level, were key steps in determining the feasibility of undertaking control measures on a National scale and the tactics that could be adopted.

Without the significant contribution made by SRUC over the last 20 years it is unlikely that the progress that has been realised on BVD control would have been achieved.

Yours Faithfully

Dr Nick Ambrose
Animal Health and Welfare Division,
Scottish Government

14 November 2013