

Biosecurity alert

Hendra virus – update

27 July 2011

Hendra Virus infection confirmed in a dog

The Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) has confirmed that a dog has tested positive for Hendra virus.

This is the first time outside of a laboratory situation that an animal other than a flying fox, horse, or a human has been confirmed with Hendra virus infection.

The dog is on a property where Hendra virus infection has been confirmed in horses. The property is currently under quarantine.

The dog previously returned two negative results for the presence of Hendra virus, however further testing conducted at AAHL confirmed the presence of antibodies to Hendra virus.

Further samples have been collected from the dog and forwarded for AAHL for testing.

Additional \$6 million to accelerate Hendra virus research

Queensland Premier Anna Bligh and NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell today announced an additional \$6 million dollars over three years to accelerate Hendra virus research.

The announcement was made after the Premiers met with internationally renowned Hendra virus scientists and key members of the Hendra virus Taskforce in Brisbane today.

The Hendra virus Taskforce has identified three main research questions which need answering:

- Why does the virus spill-over from flying foxes?
- How are horses and other animals exposed to Hendra virus?
- Why is there a spike in cases this year?

The new research will include improving our understanding of how:

- The disease behaves in flying fox colonies through mapping age and immunity structures within colonies and monitoring the stress of a colony by testing steroid levels in urine.
- Horses and flying foxes interact through further monitoring of flying fox and other animal behaviour at night, with more infra-red cameras in more locations throughout Queensland and NSW.
- Environmental factors, such as food availability, temperature and rainfall impact on the likelihood of the disease 'spilling over' from flying foxes to animals.

The research will also allow a better understanding of what is driving flying fox movements; including the impact of extreme climatic events; using satellite tracking; and other remote sensing techniques.

Further laboratory studies to investigate the susceptibility and transmission of Hendra virus in domestic species are also planned.

The press release can be found at <http://statements.cabinet.qld.gov.au>

Hendra virus – 2011 summary

The number of properties in Queensland with confirmed cases of Hendra virus totals eight this year.

The number of confirmed horse deaths from Hendra virus in Queensland is ten.

There are 87 horses being monitored daily by Biosecurity Queensland staff in conjunction with the horse owners. All horses currently appear to be clinically normal.

Update - Chinchilla area

There are two properties quarantined in the Chinchilla area following confirmation of Hendra virus in a horse on 24 July 2011.

The property where the infected horse was located and another property where a horse had close contact with the infected horse are in quarantine.

A total of five horses on the two properties have been sampled and are being monitored. All horses on the quarantined properties will undergo three rounds of testing before quarantine is lifted.

Horse events

There are currently no restrictions on the holding of horse events in Queensland.

Horse owners should not take unwell horses to horse events and should practise good biosecurity before, during and after the event.

For information on **biosecurity planning** for managers of all horse venues including racecourses, showgrounds, riding and pony club venues, agistment properties and horse events visit the [Animal Health Australia website](#).

Community Engagement

Community engagement officers will be in a number of locations in Queensland during the week. Officers will be providing information and answering any questions residents, horse owners and businesses may have on the situation.

Community information sessions will be held at Toowoomba, Chinchilla, and Warwick in the next week.

Visit the [community engagement calendar](#) on the Biosecurity Queensland website for more information

More information

Notify suspected Hendra virus cases by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 (during business hours) or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on

1800 675 888 (24-hour hotline). More information is available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

Contact your GP, local hospital Emergency Department or local Public Health Unit if you have concerns about possible exposure of people to a horse with Hendra virus infection. General enquiries about Hendra virus infection in humans may be directed to the Queensland Health Hotline on 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Contact Workplace Health and Safety Queensland on 1300 369 915 or visit www.worksafe.qld.gov.au for information about managing Hendra virus risks at workplaces.

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Dr. Rick Symons
Chief Veterinary Officer
Biosecurity Queensland