

Biosecurity alert

Hendra virus – information for industry

24 July 2011

Hendra virus in the Chinchilla area

Biosecurity Queensland today confirmed a Hendra case on a property in the Chinchilla area.

The infected horse had shown rapid onset of illness that was typical of Hendra virus and died on Friday 22 July 2011.

The property is quarantined to restrict the movement of horses on and off. The four remaining horses on the property will undergo three rounds of testing as per protocol before the quarantine is lifted.

Hendra virus in Logan Reserve

A horse that died on a property in the Logan Reserve area last month has been confirmed as having been infected with Hendra virus after a series of tests undertaken by the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL).

A private veterinarian attended the horse and took samples for testing. There were no other horses on the property. The horse was euthanased on 28 June 2011 by the private veterinarian.

Initial test results from samples taken from the horse were negative for Hendra virus. Samples were sent to AAHL for further testing for a cause of illness. AAHL testing found the horse had antibodies to Hendra virus as well as extremely low levels of Hendra virus in its blood at the time it was initially sampled. This suggests that the horse may have had a previous Hendra virus infection and had developed antibodies.

Due to the fact that there are no other horses on the property and that the horse died several weeks ago, the property is not under any quarantine restrictions.

Hendra virus in Boondall and Hervey Bay

Two properties in the Boondall area have been quarantined following confirmation of Hendra virus in a horse on 16 July 2011.

There are no horses remaining on the property where the infected horse was euthanased. Six horses on an adjoining property that had contact with the sick horse have been quarantined and sampled for Hendra virus.

One property in the Hervey Bay area is under quarantine after test results from a horse were positive for Hendra virus. The property was quarantined on 16 July 2011. There is one horse remaining on the property. This horse is being monitored and samples have been taken for testing as per protocol.

Hendra virus in North Queensland

The first round of testing of the 36 horses located on the quarantined Kuranda property has been completed. The second and third rounds will be completed next month. The property was quarantined on 12 July 2011.

Hendra virus in South East Queensland

The horses located on the quarantined properties at Beaudesert, Mt Alford and Park Ridge areas will continue to be monitored and tested as per protocol.

Hendra virus – 2011 summary

With the Chinchilla and Logan Reserve incidents, the number of Hendra virus cases in Queensland totals eight this year.

The number of confirmed horse deaths from Hendra virus in Queensland since June 2011 is ten.

All horses on quarantined properties continue to be monitored closely by Biosecurity Queensland staff in conjunction with the horse owners. All horses currently appear clinically normal.

Reducing the risk of Hendra virus

Flying foxes are attracted to a broad range of trees and vegetation that fruits and flowers as a food source.

Some examples of the trees and vegetation on Queensland properties where Hendra virus in horses has occurred this year include - a range of fig trees (including the Moreton Bay fig tree), melaleucas (including paperbarks), eucalypts and wattles and passionfruit vines. Other trees known to attract flying foxes include flowering or fruiting trees with soft fruits and stone fruits (e.g. mangoes, paw paw), palms, lily pillies and grevilleas.

This is not an exhaustive list of trees attractive to flying foxes. This will vary with the geographical area.

Trees that are attractive to flying foxes should be identified on a property to assist owners in the implementation of appropriate biosecurity practices to minimise the risk of Hendra virus in horses.

Other biosecurity measures that can be taken to reduce the risk include the following:

- Horse feed and water containers should be removed from under trees. If possible, place feed and water containers under a shelter.
- Horses should be removed from paddocks where flowering/fruiting trees are attracting flying foxes. Horses should be returned only after the trees have stopped flowering/fruiting and the flying foxes have gone. Safely clean up and dispose of any debris underneath the trees before returning horses.
- If it is not possible to remove horses from paddocks, try to temporarily remove your horses during times of peak flying fox activity (usually at dusk and during the night) or fence

off access to trees that attract flying foxes (temporary or permanent fencing).

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](http://www.animalhealthaustralia.gov.au).

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 Queensland Health Accident and 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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