



22 October 2007

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **BIOSECURITY PROCEDURES FOR HORSE EVENTS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

I am writing to advise that biosecurity procedures for horse events in Western Australia have been developed, and have recently been revised. I have attached a copy for your information, and an electronic copy is available on the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA) web site: [www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au)

Organisers of horse events have several important responsibilities, which are described in the document. One of these is the need to develop a contingency plan to manage a situation where a horse with signs of equine influenza (EI) is identified at an event.

Given the consequences of the scenario where EI is diagnosed, some organisers may decide not to hold a planned event.

There are two scenarios for event organisers to consider in developing the contingency plan. The first scenario involves a low index of suspicion ie a diagnosis of EI is considered unlikely. In this case, the attending veterinarian may take a sample for EI testing (DAFWA encourages veterinarians to take samples for EI testing as part of its surveillance for this disease).

Responsibility for deciding further action regarding the event rests with the event organiser. Action may include doing nothing other than continuing with the event as per normal. DAFWA would not be involved except to test any sample for EI on the next working day.

The second scenario is where there is a high index of suspicion of EI. In this case, there would be information available to indicate that a diagnosis of EI likely. The attending veterinarian would take samples for EI testing and DAFWA would test the samples urgently.

In this case DAFWA would order a lockdown of horses and people at the event, pending the results of laboratory testing. It should be noted that there may be some delay in transporting the samples to the South Perth laboratory, particularly from remote locations. The lockdown would be lifted if the samples test negative for EI, or extended for possibly weeks, if the samples test positive.

In this scenario, the event organiser would be responsible for implementing a contingency plan. As part of this plan, arrangements would need to be made to accommodate, feed and water the horses and the people in charge of them.

Because of the serious consequences of a high index of suspicion scenario, it is strongly recommended that event organisers implement the procedures in the attached document including the development of a contingency plan for dealing with situations where EI is suspected or confirmed.

Yours sincerely

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Director  
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## **ANIMAL BIOSECURITY**

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