

Hendra virus – information for industry

25 June 2013

Hendra virus case in the Brisbane Valley

Biosecurity Queensland is managing a Hendra virus incident in the Brisbane Valley after a positive test result was received on the evening of 24 June 2013.

A six year old, unvaccinated, thoroughbred broodmare was noticed to be unwell early on Sunday 23 June 2013.

A private veterinarian visited that morning and assessed the horse as depressed, unsteady, and reluctant to move with some evidence of pain. There were few, distant gut sounds and the horse was treated for colic. By the Sunday evening the horse had improved slightly but was still depressed.

The private veterinarian visited again the next morning, Monday 24 June. The horse had deteriorated, was weak and unsteady and was euthanased. Samples were collected for Hendra virus testing.

The horse returned positive PCR results on all sample types submitted (nasal and rectal swabs, blood and urine).

Biosecurity Queensland has quarantined the property and is undertaking tracing and risk assessments to identify susceptible animals that may have had exposure to the virus.

Testing and monitoring will be undertaken over the next month in line with current protocols.

While under quarantine, restrictions will apply to moving horses and horse materials on and off the infected property.

Hendra virus vaccine

Vaccination is the single most effective way of reducing the risk of Hendra virus infection in horses.

Biosecurity Queensland advises horse owners to talk to their veterinarian about the option of vaccinating their horses.

More information

This case highlights that most Hendra virus cases occur in June to September, however, cases can occur at any time of the year. Veterinarians should remain vigilant and be prepared. More information about Hendra virus can be found at

www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au

Notify suspected Hendra virus cases by contacting Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 (business hours) or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888 (24-hour hotline).

Contact your GP, local Queensland Health Emergency Department or local Public Health Unit if you have concerns about possible exposure of people to a horse with Hendra virus infection.

For general enquiries about Hendra virus infection in humans, call the Queensland Health Hotline on 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or visit www.health.qld.gov.au



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

Follow Biosecurity Queensland on Facebook and Twitter (@BiosecurityQld).

Dr. Rick Symons
Chief Veterinary Officer
Biosecurity Queensland