



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

6 December 2007

BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA ADVICE 2007/23

**AMENDMENTS TO INTERIM EQUINE INFLUENZA QUARANTINE
MEASURES FOR THE IMPORTATION OF HORSES**

Biosecurity Australia has updated its advice to the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) to amend the interim quarantine measures for the importation of horses that were announced on 28 September 2007.

The amendments clarify the pre-export equine influenza vaccination requirements and include an additional test for equine influenza within 24 hours of arrival in Australia. The amendments are included in interim measures for the importation of horses from all countries except New Zealand. Details are on Biosecurity Australia's website.

Stronger quarantine measures for imported horses were announced as interim measures in BAA 2007/21 on 28 September 2007 in response to the recent equine influenza outbreak. The measures tightened biosecurity arrangements during pre export quarantine (PEQ) and post arrival quarantine (PAQ). They included vaccination and testing requirements, options to extend the PAQ period and the operation of quarantine premises. AQIS has been implementing these strengthened interim measures.

In reviewing these requirements and providing advice to AQIS, Biosecurity Australia has advised that the wording in the clauses relating to pre export vaccination be amended and that an additional polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for either influenza A or equine influenza virus be undertaken with 24 hours of arrival. This clarifies the advice provided to AQIS and is intended to avoid uncertainty that some importers may have had in relation to vaccination requirements.

The wording of the clause relating to vaccination for equine influenza now states:

During the 6 months before the commencement of pre export quarantine (PEQ), the horse was vaccinated against equine influenza (not using a vaccine containing live equine influenza virus¹) on at least two occasions:

The first vaccination, given not more than 6 months and not less than 2 months prior to commencement of PEQ, was given either

*. as a booster to a primary course**

OR

. as the second vaccination of a primary course administered in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations*

The second vaccination was given between 21 and 14 days before the commencement of PEQ.

**Note: a primary course comprises at least two doses administered in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.*

¹ It should be noted that the use of recombinant canary pox virus vectored vaccine for equine influenza, which contains only the HA gene of H3N8 strains for protective immunity is acceptable.

Biosecurity Australia has also advised that a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test be undertaken for either influenza A or equine influenza virus within 24 hours of arrival in Australia. This is in addition to post-arrival quarantine PCR testing for equine influenza on day 5.

The quarantine measures have been updated for the importation of horses from the following eligible countries:

- . European Union – temporary and permanent imports
- . United States – temporary and permanent imports
- . United Arab Emirates – temporary and permanent imports and return of Australian horses
- . Macau – temporary and permanent imports and return of Australian horses
- . Hong Kong – temporary and permanent imports and return of Australian horses
- . Singapore – temporary and permanent imports and return of Australian horses.

Minor amendments have also been made to various clauses in the above quarantine policies to ensure consistency.

The interim quarantine measures are on Biosecurity Australia's website, www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au.

Next steps

Biosecurity Australia will continue to assist AQIS with the implementation of these interim measures.

Information on AQIS import permits can be obtained from AQIS through its website, www.aqis.gov.au, or by facsimile (02) 6272 3110.

Information on IRAs and policy reviews being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available at www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should get in touch with the contact officer (details below).

Confidentiality

Stakeholders are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to advice will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the advice.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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