



Media Statement

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25 February 2008

NO ISOLATION FOR HORSES FROM NON-INFECTED STATES

Changes to Western Australia's equine influenza (EI) movement conditions from 10 March will allow horses from non-infected states to enter WA without having to complete any isolation periods.

Department animal biosecurity director Dr Ashley Mercy said the changes are supported by the WA horse industry and come as a result of no new infected properties being detected since Christmas Day 2007.

"The national EI response program is on track to complete the testing necessary to show that NSW and Queensland are free of EI," Dr Mercy said.

"We expect the testing to be finished by the end of March," he said.

"There are no longer any restrictions on the movement of horses from the white zones of NSW and Queensland to the adjoining states of Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory."

"The change to WA's conditions reflects the good work being done on the national front while still providing an appropriate level of protection to the WA horse population.

Dr Mercy said that under the new conditions, owners wanting to move horses from the non-infected states will need to apply for a permit to move to WA, and provide a declaration that the horses had been in the non-infected state for at least 14 days.

"Owners wanting to move horses from the white zones of New South Wales or Queensland will need to apply for a permit to move," he said.

"Owners will also need to provide a declaration that the horses have been in the white zone for 14 days and have not had contact with horses recently moved from other zones in those state.

"Horses from zones, other than white zones will not be able to move directly to Western Australia.

"Should any new cases of EI be found in Australia, movements to WA would cease immediately."

The changes to the movement conditions have been endorsed by the WA Equine Influenza Industry Group.

The conditions for used horse gear remains unchanged with gear needing to be clean and declared to quarantine inspectors on arrival in WA.

Equine influenza is a notifiable disease. Horses showing any signs of respiratory infection must be reported to a local veterinarian or to the emergency animal disease hotline 1800 675 888.

Further information on equine influenza and changes to the movement conditions can be found at the department's website www.agric.wa.gov.au

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