



MEDIA

release

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VIGILANCE ENSURES ACT REMAINS FREE OF EQUINE INFLUENZA

Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr Will Andrew, today commended horse and donkey owners in the ACT in their efforts to ensure the ACT remains free of Equine Influenza.

“I am pleased to report that the ACT remains free of Equine influenza and horse and donkey owners in ACT are to be applauded for their continuing observance of EI prevention requirements.

“As we near Christmas it is imperative we do not let our guard down. I encourage horse and donkey owners to maintain disinfection procedures for themselves, vehicles and equipment.

“Even though there is no EI known in the ACT horse and donkey owners are encouraged to observe good hygiene when they come in contact with equines in case there is unrecognised disease present. Disease movements in NSW and Qld have frequently been a result of human transfer of virus.

“Horse and donkey owners in the ACT have shown very good compliance in obtaining and carrying movement statements and are encouraged not to become complacent – particularly as the disease is coming under control in NSW and Queensland.

“To date, 609 horses have been registered, and during October and November, 2727 movement statements were issued in the ACT.

“Currently, entry of horses to ACT from NSW green zone is permitted. These movements still require a permit to move in NSW and a movement statement for ACT.

“Australia has been dealing with the disease for three months now, and while life goes on for much of the community, and the country – many people have been deeply affected by this disease, both emotionally and financially.

Dr Andrew said that the ACT Government has developed contingency plans should EI break out in or near the Territory to ensure we are prepared should the need arise.

“I would like to remind and strongly encourage horse and donkey owners to register their ownership and location of horses so that vaccination may be more efficiently carried out if required in the event of an outbreak. Ownership information is required only for an equine influenza response and is not intended for use for any other purpose.

“To register, people can visit http://www.tams.act.gov.au/forms/horse_registration/. For those people without access to the internet, information can be sought from Canberra Connect on 13 22 81.

The TAMS website (http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/equine_influenza) also carries details of disinfection procedures, movement statements and applications for permits to conduct horse events.

For updates and further information visit www.tams.act.gov.au or www.outbreak.gov.au

Statement ends 5 December 2007

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