



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

AHRC - EQUINE INFLUENZA FORUM

What We Have Learnt

DAFF – Coordination of National EAD Response



Dr Andy Carroll
Australian Chief Veterinary Officer

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

MAIN LESSONS

- It can happen
- Planning and preparation matter
- We need to work together
- Good communication is essential
- Things will go wrong
- Biosecurity is everybody's business
- Pest and disease incursions can happen again
- We can do it



IT CAN HAPPEN

- **Australia has a very conservative quarantine policy**
- **There is no such thing as zero risk**
- **The horse sector was not well positioned**
 - Not sufficiently alert to possible threats
 - Not “biosecurity” aware
 - Not a party to “the deed”
 - Not well “plugged in” to government vet authorities
- **While rare – incursions can and do happen**
- **Consequences can be high**



PLANNING AND PREPARATION MATTER

- **AUSVETPLAN really works**
- **Emergency disease declaration quick & effective**
- **Things got together & plan implemented quickly**
- **Players knew roles and responsibilities**
- **Laboratories worked (AAHL and States)**
- **Work is both technical AND administrative**
 - **Veterinary managers at a premium**
 - **Field vets in demand**
 - **Administrators in short supply**
- **8 heads ARE better than 1 (C/W and States)**



WE NEED TO WORK TOGETHER

- **Industry involved at all levels**
 - Decision making – NMG and CCEAD
 - Industry organisations with States
 - Industry organisations with their members
 - Individuals doing the right thing
- **Creative tension**
 - combatant versus non-combatant states
- **Personal networks matter**



GOOD COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

- Parties need to keep communicating
- Essential internal messaging must be consistent
- External audiences matter
- Core messages must be agreed
- Government will work with industry
- Communication needs to be:
 - timely (otherwise fish/chip paper)
 - accessible (not all had access to internet)
 - audience targeted (understandable, simple messages, no jargon)
 - relevant



THINGS WILL GO WRONG

- There is plenty of time for blame later
- Good leadership is essential
- Good relationships work
- Don't be distracted – get things back on track
- Use the plan and the system
- Planning needs to be flexible and not set in stone
- Review and refine – something can always happen



BIOSECURITY IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

- In general horse sector is not biosecurity aware
- Need to differentiate between security (which industry is good at) and biosecurity
- Biosecurity is "EVERYBODY'S" responsibility
- The horse sector must:
 - Be alert to threats
 - Involve government vet authorities
 - Develop and enforce biosecurity plans
 - Take charge of the agenda
- The horse sector must drive the planning process



PEST AND DISEASE INCURSIONS CAN HAPPEN AGAIN

- **Border risks are increasing**
 - Ever increasing trade and tourism volumes
 - Ever increasing trade and tourism complexity
 - New and emerging pests and diseases – climate change
- **Early diagnosis essential**
 - Awareness – horse sector and vets
 - Expression – naivety and vaccination
- **Planning, preparation and practice needed**
- **Keep engaged**



WE CAN DO IT

- Lots of hard work and loads of cooperation has paid off
- The better we are prepared the lesser will be the consequences
- We need the earliest possible recognition and the smoothest possible response
- Proper identification and follow up of lessons learned can decrease adverse affects for the future

