



MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES
MINISTER FOR ENERGY
MINISTER FOR MINERAL RESOURCES
MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT

MEDIA RELEASE

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Tests show signs of horse flu – standstill placed on all horse movements in NSW

Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said preliminary test results have shown that eleven horses at Centennial Park are likely to be infected with exotic equine influenza.

“As a result the State Government has taken the unprecedented action of calling a complete standstill on the movement of horses in NSW,” Minister Macdonald said.

“This means that horses cannot move from the property they are located until more is known about the location of the disease.

“If animals are in transit, owners can take them on to their destination, or back to their property of origin – whichever is the safest and most sensible option.

“I want to make it absolutely clear that there have never been reported cases where humans have been infected with equine influenza.

“The smallest amount of risk is too much when it comes to exotic diseases finding their way into our country. That is why the State Government has moved quickly to respond and stop the disease from spreading.

“We are taking this threat extremely seriously and had no other option but to call the standstill which will unfortunately cause a number of racing and other horse activities to be cancelled.

“Protection of the State’s horse industries is our priority and we will be working tirelessly in the days and weeks ahead to prevent equine influenza spreading.

“Owners witnessing symptoms of equine influenza in their animals should call the emergency animal disease hotline 1800 675 888.

“I stress destruction of horses is not necessary in the control of this disease.

“The main control strategy is to stop the movement of infected horses.”

Minister Macdonald said screening tests carried out overnight by the State Government’s Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute laboratory returned positive results.

“Australia is one of a few countries with significant equine industries that are free from equine influenza, we must act swiftly to prevent further spread,” he said.

“Equine influenza is not a killer disease, on average affected animals recover within ten days, but it would have a disastrous impact on our horse breeding and racing industries.

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Equine Influenza clinical signs

- Increased temperature
- Deep, dry hacking cough
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle pain and stiffness
- Laboured breathing

Horse owners witnessing these symptoms in their animals should call the emergency animal disease hotline 1800 675 888.

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