

The Agriculture and Environment Committee Hendra Vaccine Inquiry
C/- Mr Rob Hansen
Parliament House
Brisbane, Queensland, 4000
Phone: 07 3553 6660

By email: robert.hansen@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Hansen,

RE: Veterinarian Submission to Hendra virus Vaccine Inquiry

My name is Dr Charles Bunce and although I do not reside in Queensland I was registered there for approximately thirty five years, as I am a founder (in 1978) and partner of a mixed practice in Moree (close to the border).

I wish to address the following Terms of Reference in the Qld Parliament's Hendra virus Vaccine Inquiry:


- The incidence and impact of adverse reactions by horses following vaccination and the reporting of adverse reactions and economic impacts of the Hendra vaccine.
- The development, trials and approval processes of the vaccine
- Who bears the risks of HeV infection and who incurs the costs and receives the benefits from each risk mitigation option?

We have vaccinated several hundred horses in our area, and see about 10-20% experience some swelling and pain following the injection. This is only a minor reaction, and in my opinion a minor problem. We see approximately the same proportion of horses react the same way to Strangles vaccine, which has been around for many years. As an older member of the community I was given a 'flu vaccine last week, and warned that I would experience some pain the next day. If we can tolerate this ourselves, surely our horses can do likewise.

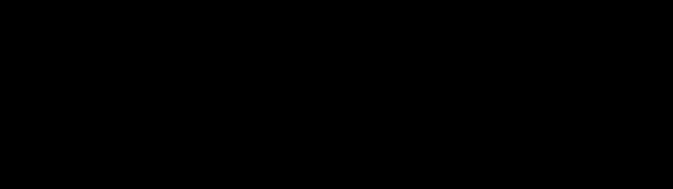
In my opinion the HendraVirus disease presents an extremely worrying risk to veterinarians and their staff. I don't have the figures but it must elevate the risk level in our profession to one of the worst in the country. On top of this it has caused a workplace health and safety minefield for us. Vaccination is the ONLY real weapon we have to reduce this, and so we rely heavily on it.

To think that so many horse owners are so unwilling to vaccinate their horses – they would rather put themselves, their families and their veterinarians at risk of death than pay a few dollars and risk a minor reaction – makes me furious. What price do they put on a human life??? I would like to see them sued for millions of dollars the next time someone dies of it.

Yours sincerely,


Charles Bunce B.V.Sc.

Moree Veterinary Hospital.

 Moree 2400.